VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND SOCIETY IN IRELAND, 1930-1990

A Case Study in the Politics of Education

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Doctor of Philosophy
Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
1998

Declaration

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself and that all data were collected by myself.

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Date: 8th April, 1998.

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Abstract of Thesis

This study centres on the Vocational Education Committee (VEC) system which was established by legislation in the newly independent Irish Free State in 1930 and which has operated as a sub-system of Irish education until the present. A local authority based system, with particular focus on the vocational dimension of education, the VEC system operated at the interseces between primary education and secondary education, and also between secondary and tertiary education. In its structures, functions and its relationships, the VEC system in Ireland has been implicated centrally in the processes of change through which Irish education responded to the circumstances of a newly independent European state, formerly a British colony and part of the United Kingdom. Through its structures, functions and relationships, the VEC system has been a site, or network of sites, in which the relationships between Irish society in its social, cultural, and economic dimensions, interacted with the Irish education system.

Why was the VEC system established in the form that it was? Why did it remain virtually unaltered from 1930 to 1990? What relationship existed between the VEC system and the other elements of the national education system in Ireland? A distinction in the literature between 'the Politics of Education' and 'Educational Politics' is utilised to separate questions relating to the larger issues of the relationship between education and society (i.e. the Politics of Education), from those of the 'internal' processes of the exercise of power and the conduct of policy within the education system and its sub-systems. Thus, demography, economy, social structure, culture and politico-administrative dimensions of society are examined in their interactions with the VEC system in Ireland during the period, 1930-1990. In addition, the politics of the VEC system within education policy making in Ireland is examined as a dimension of 'educational politics'.

Evidence is drawn from a number of sources including interviews conducted by the author in 1994/95, archive material from The National Archive, Dublin, The Department of Education, Dublin, Vocational Education Committees, The Association of CEO's of Vocational Education Committees, and the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA), and published reports and other documents. The study argues:

- That the ideological domain, the 'assumptive worlds' of the education policy community and the composition of the policy community are the critical determinants of the nature of educational change.
- That the Vocational Education Committee system in Ireland is most appropriately understood as a limited form of state assertion by the Irish state in the face of the dominance of churches in a mono-integrated provision of education in Ireland.
- That the VEC system in Ireland constitutes a quasi-autonomous 'carrier' for a set of educational roles of the state in the cultural, social, economic and political governance of Irish society, in a context where the legitimacy of the state in these roles is contested by other agencies.
- That the educational politics of Irish education in the period 1930-1990 is appropriately characterised as a period of 'competitive conflict' leading to a period of education systematisation in the 1990's.
- That change in ideological dominance has significantly altered the power relations of Irish education but control over the educational assets has remained almost static and helps explain the restrictions on education change to date.
- That there has been an alignment of the Vocational Education Committee system with the education needs of specific social classes.

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Abbreviations used in the text.

ASTI	Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland
DATI	Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction
HEA	Higher Education Authority
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
ITIA	Irish Technical Instruction Association
ITEA	Irish Technical Education Association
IVEA	Irish Vocational Education Association
RTC	Regional Technical College
T.D.	Teachta Dala (Member of Parliament – Ireland)
TIB	Technical Instruction Branch, Department of Education
TUI	Teachers' Union of Ireland
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VEOO	Vocational Education Officers Association
VTA	Vocational Teachers' Association

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the guidance and support of my supervisors, Professor Alice Brown and Professor Lindsay Paterson. I wish also to express my appreciation for the academic assistance provided and personal support of Dr. John Logan, Limerick, Mr. Jim Gleeson, Limerick, Dr. Padraig O'Donnabhain, Tralee and Professor Aine Hyland, Cork. I wish to thank those who were so helpful as to make themselves available for extended interviews for this study and those who assisted me with access to documentation.

I am grateful to my colleagues in the VEC service who have assisted me with access to documentation and who helped me in numerous ways.

I wish to acknowledge the support of the members and staff of Town of Tralee VEC and Co. Kerry VEC during the conduct of the study and particularly to Breda Heaslip for her assistance in all stages of this study and the production of this text.

Finally, I acknowledge the endurance and understanding of my family during the extended adventure that was the production of this study.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER

THE STUDY

> *Description and narrative are emphasis, choice, interpretation. The organising concepts and categories are interpretation... The very starting point is an act of interpretation.*
>
> Silver, H. (1980) Education as History, p2.

This is a study of the Vocational Education Committee (VEC) system in Ireland, in which the establishment and development of the system is presented as a case study in the politics of education. Vocational Education in Ireland has been delivered through a local authority based system of schools, colleges and courses from 1899. Since 1959, additional national, state-sponsored agencies have had a role in apprenticeship training and industrial training and since 1963 a national agency for training in the catering and tourism industy has existed. This is a study of the politics of an education system with its primary focus on the establishment, operation and development of the VEC (Vocational Education Committee) system as a sub-set of the national education provision.

There are no privileged vantage points from which social science study may be conducted. This opening section seeks to make explicit the vantage point adopted for this work. At one level, it is an insider's study. A person working in a particular position in a particular organisational setting (a Chief Executive in the Vocational Education Committee system in Ireland) examines the origins, development and relationships of that system. From this personal point of view, the study is designed to provide an understanding of the processes by which contemporary policy dilemmas came to be generated and, thereby, to contribute to an illumination of the politics of Irish education. Coolahan, (1984) noted of nineteen books on education published in Ireland between 1922 and 1962 that all were on historical topics and the majority, twelve, were institutional histories.[1] Logan, referring to a wider range of publications, suggests that the purposes of the authors included the commemoration of the foundation of a particular institution or set of institutions, or the development of professional solidarity and loyalty towards individual institutions and educational organisations- as for example in histories of teacher unions or religious orders. Their purposes were, in his view, "to exhort while explaining."[2] More generally, Logan sees such studies as "placing these institutions within a general framework of historical events."[3] This study does not eschew historical analysis but does

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1 Coolahan, J. (1984), "The Fortunes of Education as a subject of study and research in Ireland" in Irish Educational Studies, Vol.4, No.1, p18.

2 Logan, J. (forthcoming) "Schooling, Literacy and Society in 19th Century Ireland", Ch.1. Among the works cited by Logan in this respect are: Taylor, WBS, (1845) "History of the University of Dublin", London, Healy, J. (1985) Maynooth College: its Centenary History, Dublin, Burke-Savage, R. (1940) Catherine McCauley, the first Sister of Mercy, Dublin, Normoyle, M.C. (1975) A Tree is Planted: the Life and Times of Edmond Rice, privately published, and Coolahan, J., (1984) The ASTI and Post-Primary Education in Ireland, 1909-1984. Dublin. Logan cites also a number of more general texts , as for example, J. Godkin, Education in Ireland: its History, Institutions, System, Statistics and Progress, from earliest times to the present, (London, 1862); G. Balfour, The Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland, (Oxford, 1903); J.J. Auchmuty, Irish Education: an Historical Survey, (London, 1937); J.J. McElligott, Education in Ireland, (Dublin, 1966) and J.Coolahan Irish Education: its History and Structure, (Dublin, 1981)

3 ibid.

not claim to be a history of the Vocational Education Committee system. It utilises historical sources- archive material, official reports and contemporary accounts- but disavows any institutional agenda. The persona adopted, or striven for, is that of the student of the politics of education, privileged with access to a range of qualitative and quantitative data which allows a detailed illumination of the politics of Irish education through a study of the VEC system.

But this study is conducted as a university supervised thesis, located in a Social Science faculty supervised from the perspectives of a department of politics and education policy located in Edinburgh, Scotland. This university based aspect of the study carries a responsibility to locate the work in the contexts of the existing academic literature which explores the politics and social significance of education in general and of vocational education in particular. The presentation of the work in an academic institution outside Ireland implies a responsibility to take cognisance of the comparative potential of such a study. Implicit in the focus on the subject as an Irish case study is an awareness of the opportunities for locating structures, processes, policy and politics in Ireland in a wider, internationally aware context. This is not a comparative study but to undertake it in a Scottish University provides a distancing mechanism which allows a sense of *"otherness"* to develop in respect of what might otherwise remain familiar. It also allows for a set of "outsider" questions to feed into the study at all stages of its life.

It is not sufficient to locate the study in such broad personal or social terms. It is necessary to make explicit those theoretical assumptions and operating principles which underpin the study. The following section lays out those assumptions which may be deemed paradigmatic for this study. These act as an enveloping set of understandings which provide the basic parameters for the explorations outlined here. The significance of these assumptions lies in the fact that without them, the study could not be considered a useful endeavour.

This is a study of a sub-system in the education provision of one state for the period 1930-1990. The state is the Republic of Ireland, the twenty-six counties of the island of Ireland, which had been known as the "Irish Free State" for the period 1922-1948. The sub-system was one which was designed to provide for vocational and technical education within the state.

Archer has defined a state educational system as:

> *a nationwide and differentiated collection of institutions devoted to formal education, whose overall control and supervision is at least partly governmental, and whose component parts and processes are related to one another.*
>
> (Archer 1979, p54).

Within such a definition the vocational education sub-system can be seen as articulated with - the primary or elementary school system, the secondary/grammar system, and with the university/higher education

system. It is also articulated with the state administrative agencies designed to exercise those elements of control and supervision which the state wishes, or is able to exert.

A study of the vocational education system will have to concern itself then with the nature of the relationships which exist between it and the other sub-systems. It will be concerned with the shifts and changes in these relationships over time. This set of relationships may be regarded as the "external relationships" of the vocational education system with its proximate educational environment. The vocational education system has its antecedents, and its processes of change and development over time. Much of the study of education policy and politics is aimed at explicating or illuminating the mechanisms and process of change and the altering relationships between sub-sets of the education system. It is hoped that this study will make some contribution to that understanding by illuminating dimensions of internal educational change in Ireland over the period in question.

But the total education system and each sub-system within it have also a set of relationships with other parts of the society, with the economy, with the political and administrative systems, with the social class structures, with churches and other formations of civil society. These less proximate, external relationships may be stronger or weaker for each sub-system in the education system. They will also change over time. This study will attempt to explore how changes in the larger social, economic and politico-administrative systems impinged upon the vocational education system over the period and so generated educational change. This examination will be carried out in the light of the understandings developed by studies of policy making and educational change in other states[4].

Making a conceptual distinction between the less proximate and more immediate relationships of the vocational education sub-system is not to be construed as a claim that the vocational sub-system relates to the larger society in an autonomous way, unaffected by the interactions effected with and by other educational sub-systems. The education system as a totality is in dynamic interaction with the larger social formations of which it is a part. A complex set of organic and adjusting relationships is held to exist between them.

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[4] The works of Brian Simon, Margaret Archer and Fritz Ringer, Charles Raab and Maurice Kogan each provide an extended analysis of the theoretical aspects of such a systems and policy related inquiry.
See in particular Archer (1979) "Cross-National Research and the Analysis of Educational Systems" in Kolin, (eds.), (1989) Cross-National Research in Sociology, London:Sage, p242-261, and essays in Ringer, Simon and Muller, (eds.) (1987) "The Rise of the Modern Educational System", Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

In the analysis that is undertaken here of this complexity, four starting points or basic assumptions are identified.[5] There is a general assumption contained implicitly in the introductory observations above which relate to the education system and its structure. To speak of the "structure of the education system" is to speak of *"the articulation of the system with society and the inter-relationship of its component parts."*[6]

The education system as a whole and its sub-systems are constituted as social formations in their own right which posits for them at least some elements of control over their own destiny. As put by Ringer, *"..an education system is at least partly an autonomous element in the total society, not just an adjunct of more decisive processes or institutions."* (Ringer, 1979, p2). This is an assumption which underpins the study of the internal politics of education as a significant study. If it were not to be accepted as a reasonable assumption, then changes in the educational system could be "read off" the changes in those "more decisive processes or institutions" of which it is an adjunct. Archer refers to such a (counter) assumption as *"the fallacy of structural permeation"*, the effect of which is *"to deprive the structure of the education system of any theoretical significance because these (education systems) are nothing more than the administrative framework, the "passive mediator" through which power relationships in society are given educational expression."*[7] (Archer, 1989, p244). Archer suggests that this fallacy is a common denominator in a wide range of theoretical writing which addresses educational development. She includes in this category the work of Bernstein and that of Bourdieu who focus on cultural transmission and reproduction, neo-Marxists such as Bowles and Gintis, "credentialists" such as Collins and critical theorists *"of Frankfurt school inspiration"* (sic).[8]

This general position, which I share with Margaret Archer, asserting a modicum of self-direction or weight to the education system, is the basis of a set of other key vantage-points in this study. The first is the adoption of the view that the extent to which external social formations penetrate the education system is problematic rather than axiomatic. The education system may be more or it may be less open to the influence of other social institutions, like the economy or the churches or the state administrative system, for example. An obvious corollary of this position is the assumption that the level of openness or closedness of the education system may change over time and is a function not only of the relationships of the education system with society but of the internal structures of the education system itself.

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5 The author is aware that the process of making assumptions transparent is an ever uncompleted task which speedily draws one into that philosophical discourse which examines the underpinnings of the social sciences. Such philosophical explorations will be engaged in only if the coherence of the argument makes them imperative.

6 Archer, (1989) p244.

7 ibid.

8 ibid.

Flowing from an assertion of relative autonomy for the education system, is a realisation of the potential for differentials in the "penetrability" of different structures within the education system. Thus for example, the vocational education system may be less or more open to, or penetrated by, other social systems than is the system of primary or the system of higher education. The relative openness of the sub-systems then becomes a focus of attention. The analysis presented in this study will attempt to uncover the extent of openness to the larger society evident in the case of the vocational education system over time. The relative openness of the VEC system will be contrasted with what would appear as a more limited openness on the part of other elements of the total system. Linked to this is Archer's concept of "mono-integration."

In her earlier work, Archer uses the concept of "mono-integration" to describe the limitations set on the openness of systems of education at a point or period in their historical development when the systems are functionally related to the needs of one social formation in the society - i.e. the churches.[9] The use and the potential of this concept, - and its concomitant - "multiple-integration" in examining the Irish education system in this study further allows exploration of the extent to which inter-penetration or openness is a problematic concern for this study. "Mono-integration" suggests a delimited form of openness. A change from mono-integration to more complex forms of integration requires change in the internal structures of education. It is likely that such change will be contested. This posits the politics of education as a significant domain for study. Attaching significance to the politics of education thus, and locating therein an explanation for the differential development of the education system, is a third assumption informing this study. As an assumption it serves to balance the emphasis on educational adaptation to general social change which is the dominant operating assumption in many of the approaches referred to above.

The final (fourth) general assumption operating in this study is the realisation that in different societies dissimilar education structures can be utilised to deliver similar functions. Much contemporary analysis of education systems stresses the functions of these systems and the functional similarities to be found across states. Thus explanations of educational change are couched in terms of the functional relationship posited for the education system in, for example, Modernisation Theory, or Human Capital Theory, Political Integration Theory, Social Control Theory or what Archer terms, *"Ideological Diffusion Theory."*[10] A view underlining this study is that it is not sufficient to espouse any one of the above frameworks which are used to identify a set of processes or functions for an education system and to build an explanation of educational development on it. Not only must those functions and frames be integrated, but how the structurally different education systems (and sub-systems) process them, equally requires to be stressed.

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9 Archer (1979) Social Origins of Educational Systems:London:Sage p59 ff. See also Archer (1984) University edition of "Social Origins...." London:Sage.

10 Archer (1989), p243.

This again focuses attention on the educational politics in any particular state as an explanatory variable to be put alongside the range of functional adjustments used to explain educational change.

An examination of the vocational education committee system in Ireland in the period 1930-1990 will entail an exploration of the internal dynamics of the system and its shifts over time; it will entail an exploration of the interplay of the VEC system with its proximate environment in the rest of the education system. It will, finally, entail explorations in the interplay of the system with its larger, less proximate environment in Irish society. The study starts out from a view that education systems and sub-systems have a measure of relative autonomy and are not mere ciphers or reflections of other "more significant" social phenomena; that no one functional role of an education system carries sufficient explanatory power; that the openness of an education system or sub-system to its wider environment is more problematic than axiomatic and that the politics of education is important.
From these vantage-points and from a particular social and time setting the Vocational Education Committee system in Ireland is approached.

The Study

Research Questions

Works on the history of education in Ireland have provided the basis of current received understandings of the evolution and present structure of the Irish education system.[11] The greater part of that work has been descriptive, and derived from work in the scholarly traditions of either history or sociology. This study attempts to integrate these perspectives with ones brought from the disciplines of politics and its sub-set, policy studies.

This study of the vocational education system attempts a descriptive characterisation of the Irish education system at the level of system, that is at the national level.
Why was the Vocational Education Committee established in 1930, with its remit, structures and relationships? What economic, social, cultural, political and educational logic supported its establishment. What conflicts arose and how were they resolved?

There are two aspects to these questions. Firstly, in what ways was the establishment and subsequent development of the VEC system linked to the larger society and what were the linkages? Secondly, what were the relationships of the VEC system to the other elements of Irish education, the primary, secondary and university systems? In what ways did these relationships change and what models can be used to adequately explain these changes?

More specifically, this study argues that the establishment of the VEC system may be seen as an "assertion" by state managers against the dominance of churches in Irish education. It is posited that the VEC system was established as a "substitute" form of post-elementary or secondary school provision in a private, mono-integrated education provision and thereby introduced a further "segmentation" into the Irish education system. Does the available evidence support a characterisation of the internal politics of Irish education 1930-1990 (what Dale (1994) terms "education politics" as opposed to the "politics of education)[12] as a period of competitive conflict leading to a (present) period of education systematisation? To what extent is the available evidence consistent with a characterisation of the changing fortunes of the VEC system as an arena of conflict between "centralising" and "decentralising" tendencies in Irish educational and general politics?

If, as Dale suggests, the politics of education is fundamentally the

> *process and structures through which macro-societal expectations of education as an institution are identified and interpreted and constituted as an agenda for the education system"*[13]

then this study attempts to delineate these processes and structures in respect of Irish society.

Methods and Data

Three distinctive subject areas of social enquiry have been addressed for this study:

- Irish society as a context for the education system and the VEC system, in particular;
- Academic discourse on the relationships between education and society;
- The VEC system in Ireland.

In the first instance, the contexts of the VEC system, that is, Ireland 1930-1990, in its demographic, economic, socio-cultural and political dimensions, have been examined. A composite description of Ireland 1930-1990, as a context for the VEC system, is presented. This study has been conducted largely using secondary sources and official publications and strives to be descriptive. The original aspect of this element of the study resides in the selection and juxtapositioning of material. The results of this enquiry are presented in Part 3. Chapter 4 presents data and a synthesis of current scholarship on the demography of Ireland in the twentieth century. Chapter 3 presents a summary account of the development of economic

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11 See Chapter 2 section on Education Policy Research in Ireland.

12 Dale (1994) opcit, p35: "Very broadly, by the politics of education I mean the agenda for education and the processes and structure through which it is created. By education politics I mean the processes whereby this agenda is translated into problems and issues for schools, and school responses to these issues."

13 ibid. p3, 36.

policy in the Irish State during the same period. This account is assembled from the work of academic economists, government publications and organisations such as ESRI and NESC. [14]

Secondly, discourse on the relationships between education and society is examined by way of an extended review of the relevant literature which is presented in summary form in Part 2. Because of the "vocational" nature of the VEC system extended treatment is given of the "economic nexus" between education and society in Chapter 3. Chapter 2 presents a summary synthesis of the literature reviewed on the "political nexus" between education and society.

In the third area of study, the VEC system in Ireland, the data utilised is of two kinds:documentary data and interview data. The study may be characterised as a "longitudinal, multilevel" study in which the social phenomena occur over an extended time-scale (1930-1990) and at varying levels of aggregation, i.e. at the national or state level, at the local VEC level, at an institutional or school level and at the level of the individual agent.[15] In this area, which focuses on the policy processes relating to the establishment and development of the vocational education system, primary data has been sought. The results of this enquiry are reported in Chapters 7-9. This material constitutes the centre of the study and is the basis of the study's originality.

Primary data has been sought at the national level by the examination of available unpublished cabinet papers, papers of the Department of Finance and those of the Department of Education accessible through the Irish National Archive. In addition, some limited papers have been accessible from the archives of the Department of Education. The bulk of the statistical data utilised is drawn from the annual reports and statistical tables published by the Department of Education, 1924-1993. It is to be noted that the extended written report, as opposed to the statistical tables, was discontinued by the Department of Education in 1963. This absence precludes access to the official view of the Department on contemporary developments since that time. Indeed, the general tardiness of the Department of Education in respect of its own records has meant that the Department of Finance files in the National Archive are the best available source of information on internal civil service policy processes for the period 1930-1960's.[16] The outcome of these processes, in circular letters, departmental reports etc. are part of the published available record. But much of the internal politics of the Department is not available for scrutiny other than through interviews with participants.

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14 ESRI is the Economic and Social Research Institute; NESC is the National Economic and Social Council.

15 See Plewis, I. (1994) "Longitudinal Multilevel Models" in Dale, A. & Davies, R.B. (eds.) "Analyzing Social & Political Change:A Casebook of Methods, London, Sage, p118-135. This text provides an introduction to sophisticated statistical methodologies for such data analysis. It is not proposed to use sophisticated statistical methods in this study.

16 Because all matters with resource implications required to be submitted for approval to the Department of Finance most significant policy proposals appear as issues in these files. However they are not particularly helpful in providing insights to the internal workings of the Education Department and its relationship with policy partners.

The publications and the archives of the other national entities in the vocational education system, i.e. the national organisation representing VEC committees (the Irish Technical Instruction Association, 1902-1944; the Irish Vocational Education Association, 1944-date), the representative organisations for VEC teachers (Vocational Education Officers Organisation, 1930-1954; Vocational Teachers' Association (VTA) 1955-73 and the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) 1973 - date and the CEO's Association, are available for consultation at the National Library, the University College, Dublin Archive, the IVEA Head Office and in the offices of individual committees. The archives of the IVEA and the CEO's Association contain the agreed minutes of meetings between these organisations and the Department or Minister for Education. For the period 1944 to 1980, these minutes were compiled by the one person, Mr. Kevin Killeen, CEO for Waterford City, who for that extended period was Honorary Secretary of the IVEA. In addition, the annual reports of IVEA congresses contain verbatim transcripts of the debates and papers presented, for the period 1902-1980. The nature of the documentary record since 1980 is less comprehensive, with decisions and outcomes as opposed to the debate being presented. At the level of individual committees, the minutes of committees have been available to me for consultation at the offices of individual VECs. No attempt has been made to review the minutes of all committees but I have examined segments of individual committee minutes in pursuit of particular topics or themes. As is mentioned below (see p.151), studies based (inter alia) of the Minutes of Committees have been conducted (Meath, Kennedy (1981) Galway, MacEoin (1981) and Cork, Owen, (1984). In addition, City of Dublin, Co. Cork & Co. Monaghan VECs published commemorative reviews of their committees work on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the VEC Act, 1930.[17] Data and documentation has not been systematically sought at the level of individual institutions. A small number of institutional histories, written in a commemorative vein on celebratory occasion, is available and these have been utilised on an opportunistic basis.[18] Local and national newspaper files have been utilised, again on an opportunistic basis, to supplement official documentation.

A number of published personal accounts of the vocational education system and Irish educational policy making in the period under review have been referred to [O'Laoighaire, (1991), and O'Connor (1986)]. Others, less extended reflections, are contained in the commemorative publications referred to above, - e.g. Hill, 1980 in the Co. Monaghan publication. The core data utilised in this study is the text of a series of twenty four (24) extended, partially structured interviews conducted by the author with the explicit purpose of eliciting data around the research questions posed. These interviews have been conducted by the author,

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17 City of Dublin VEC (1980) Fiftieth Anniversary of the Vocational Education Act, Power, M. (1980), Half a Century, Co. Clare VEC 1930-1980, Ennis, Co. Clare VEC, and Monaghan VEC (1980) Jubilee Supplement:Co. Monaghan VEC, 1930-1980, published with The Northern Standard, 4/12/1980.

18 For example, O'Hara, B. (1993), Regional Technical College, Galway:The First 21 Years, Galway, Galway RTC, Forde, PE. & Tolan, E.B.A., (and) Time Cannot Dim:The Life and Times of Grange Vocational School, Sligo, Sligo VEC; Bray VEC (1981) St. Thomas's Community College, Official Opening Booklet.

in the period April 1994 to December 1995. Thirty-eight persons were contacted by letter with an outline of the research project and a summary interview schedule. Three persons failed to respond to the request and the following groups of people were interviewed:

Politicians

- Brian Lenihan, Minister for Education, 1968-69 and member of Co. Roscommon VEC. Mr. Lenihan's career included a wide range of senior cabinet posts.
- Ms. Gemma Hussey, Minister for Education, 1982-1986
- Ms. Mary O'Rourke, Minister for Education, 1987-91, Member and Chair, Westmeath VEC, and Board of Management, Athlone, RTC. Mrs. O'Rourke has held a number of senior portfolios in Fianna Fail led governments since 1986
- Mr. Niall Blaney, Minister for Local Government, 1957-66,Minister for Agriculture 1966-69, Member and Chair, Donegal VEC, Member of Standing Council IVEA.
- Mr. Sean Conway, member of Co Meath VEC, 1964-1996, President IVEA, 1986-1995.
- Mr. S. Donegan, Member and Chair, City of Dublin VEC, 1963-1987.
- In addition, a telephone interview was undertaken with Dr. Garrett Fitzgerald, Prime Minister 1981-1982, 1982-87, using the schedule as for full interviews.

Department of Education Officials:

- Mr. Liam O'Liadhin, Secretary, Department of Education, 1979-85, who joined the Department of Education in 1946.
- Mr. Noel Lindsay, Secretary, Department of Education, 1989-92, who joined the Department in the early 1950's.
- Mr. Sean O'Mahony, Asst. Secretary, Department of Education 1977-84, who joined the Department in the mid-1940's at the Technical Instruction Branch.
- Dr. Finbar O'Callaghan, Former Chief Inspector and Asst. Secretary, Department of Education, who joined the Technical Instruction Branch as an inspector in the early 1950's.
- Mr. William Hyland, Member of OECD Study Team, 1963-66, Senior Statistician, Department of Education 1966-90.

Teachers and Teacher Union Representatives

- Mr. Sean McCarthy, Teacher and former President of Teachers' Union of Ireland, 1987.
- Mr. Jim Dorney, Teacher and General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland, 1976-date.
- Mr. Micheal O'Donnell, Teacher and Principal, Bolton Street College of Technology, and Director, Dublin Institute of Technology, (1955-1995)
- Mr. Jim Lysaght, Teacher and Principal, Mallow Vocational School: Retired 1992.

- Mr. J.K. Rooney, who has been a teacher, a President of the Teachers' Union of Ireland, and the General Secretary of IVEA 1980- 1996.

- **Church People**
- Dr. Francis McKiernan, Bishop of Kilmore (Cavan) former Secretary, School Principal and Chairman, Irish Episcopal Commission for Education
- Dr. Denis O'Callaghan, Dean of Cloyne and Chairman, Co. Cork VEC
- Sr. Eileen Randles, IBVM, Former Secondary Head, former Education Secretary, Diocese of Dublin, former Secretary, Irish Episcopal Commission for Education, currently Secretary, Catholic Primary School Managers Association
- Bro. Mark McDonnell, Provincial, Irish Christian Brothers, former Secondary Headmaster and teacher.
- Sr. Teresa McCormack, Former Head, Secondary school and Director, Education Office, Conference of Religious in Ireland.

- **Chief Executive Officers**
- Mr. Seamus McDwyer, CEO, Co. Kerry VEC, 1949-84.
- Mr. Austin Waldron, CEO, Co. Carlow VEC, 1954-90.
- Dr. J. McCabe, CEO, Co. Sligo VEC, 1962-67, subsequently with UNESCO and the World Bank.[19]

Two general criteria were applied to the construction of the sample for interview. Firstly, following McPherson & Raab (1988), there was the desirability of speaking with people who, prime facie, had a significant involvement with the policy processes relating to Irish education generally and vocational education in particular.[20] Significant involvement with the policy process is deemed to range from generation and selection of policy to its implementation. Hence the requirement to include heads of institutions as well as agents at central government level. The second criterion was to include in the sample

(a) those whose experience was *primarily* as national policy makers, with

(b) those whose *primary* responsibility was at local or committee level.

It is to be acknowledged that politicians, CEOs and teacher representatives, at various times, had to combine both a central and a local perspective, acting in a representative capacity.

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19 Of those interviewed, Mr. Lenihan, Mr. Blaney, Mr. Conway, Mr. Hyland, Mr. Rooney and Mr. McDwyer have died in the interim. May they rest in peace.

20 See MacPherson & Raab, (1988) opcit. p58. Unlike the McPherson & Raab interviews, where retired interviews were preferred, few of this group, (8), were retired at the time of interview.

Most of those identified for interview were personally known to the author in the course of his work as CEO for Tralee VEC and through his membership of various policy related arenas, accessible to him as a CEO. A letter of invitation together with an outline interview schedule was sent to thirty-eight identified interviewees. Venues and dates for interview were made by mutual agreement and all interviews were taped. The interviews varied in duration from one hour to three and a half-hours. The text of transcribed interviews were forwarded to the interviewee for agreement as attributable and for quotation. In many interviews, passages were marked as "not for quotation" or "off the record." Agreement was reached in respect of such material that it could be utilised in an unattributed format and excluding names where they occurred. This allowed the use of material in a limited, less direct way. It has been agreed, in one instance, that text using "off the record" material would be submitted to the interviewee, prior to publication. An expanded version of the summary interview schedule was used by the author to guide the conduct of the interview. However, the structure of the interviews varied significantly with the sequencing of topics, the amount of time on particular topics and the level of exchange varying considerably. Exchanges in the course of interviews were designed primarily to elicit the "understandings" held by the interviewee on a matter being recount ed.

The following extracts will illustrate:

> ***O'Reilly***
> *The political system and the committee system?*
> ***McDwyer***
> *Yes, was good up to about the mid '70s. And then began to go downhill, not because of central governments - although there was a bit of an element of interference there - but because of local politicians, grabbing County Councillors who put all their own members on the VECs, their own supporters.*
> ***O'Reilly***
> *The members, other than those who had been elected members, became party political?*
> ***McDwyer***
> *Shamelessly, and that didn't happen until the mid '70s. Well, it would have always been a little of it, but after the '70s, it became very strong. In the early '70s it became very strong. It did a great disservice really to committees.*
> ***O'Reilly***
> *Why was there a change do you think?*
> ***McDwyer***
> *Partly, because, coinciding with that the tradition of the chairman of the VEC being priests went out at the same time, and you had laymen taking over the chairmanship, and the laymen were always from the county councils, were always attached to a political party and always strongly influenced.*
> ***O'Reilly***
> *So that the VEC became more significant in local politics, did it?*
> ***McDwyer***
> *Well, now.*
> ***O'Reilly***
> *To the politicians?*
> ***McDwyer***
> *Oh yes, to the politicians it became very important....the competition to be made a member of the VEC became a very much sought after thing by the local aspiring politician.*
>
> (Interview with Seamus McDwyer, retired CEO, Co. Kerry VEC, conducted 6/2/95, p17-18.)

"How good are the interviews"?[21] Ozga & Gewitz (1994) in an intriguingly titled paper, draw attention to the messy and complex matter of trying to "disentangle the research process and the research relationship."[22] These authors who came to their male interviewees with a "strong theoretical framework", with a focus on feminist concerns, were, they report, greatly helped in their access to interviews by being referenced as "quite harmless."[23] McPherson & Raab report precisely the same phrase in respect of themselves, being used in the same context - arranging introductions to interviewees. There is no evidence of that phrase being used in any parallel circumstance for this study, but the interviews do contain references to a consciousness on the part of interviewees of the institutional and political "location" of the interviewer. The O'Mahony interview contains references to how the interviewer would, putatively, manage difficult committee members and the Randles interview contains a reflection on the extent to which the author might be surmised to have affiliations to a particular political party.[24] These references bring home the need to be sensitive to

(a) the "capacity of polished and experienced policy practitioners" to "play" the interview process and

(b) to the potential for bias in the interviewer.

In this case, the interviewer is a reasonably high profile, if minor actor in the education policy process, who engaged in education policy exchanges with many of the interviewees either currently or in the past. To the methodological and ethical dimensions of this research dilemma, it is suggested that there are two reasonable responses. The first is to seek to "triangulate" assertions of fact or interpretations presented in interview, by collating a number of points of view on the same event or process, by seeking accounts from (a) different interviewees and (b) from documentary evidence, if possible. The second response is to put the full attributable text of the interviews into the public domain. This will allow an interrogation of the validity of their use in this study and their re-interpretation by other researchers, in due course.

An additional issue is what McPherson & Raab describe as the "*selective operation of present attention and interpretation on a past which was itself at the time selectively perceived, interpreted and stored.... (i.e. memory).*" In this dilemma, a similar position is taken to that adopted by McPherson & Raab: "*What remains, and what is forgotten, tell us something about both the past and present though it may not be easy to disentangle them.*"[25]

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21 This is a question courageously asked by McPherson & Raab (1988) p61.

22 Ozga, J. & Gewitz, S. (1994) "Sex, Lies and Audio-tape:Interviewing the Education Policy Elite" in Halpin & Troyna (ed.) op cit. p121-135.

23 ibid. p129.

24 O'Mahony Interview, 15/3/95 and Randles Interview. These reflections convey an awareness of the interviewer as an actor in the politics of Irish education and highlight the interactive nature of the interview process at levels not always precisely observable in the recorded exchanges.

25 McPherson & Raab (1988) opcit. p68.

Interview data is being analysed by collating the interviewees" observations using the interview schedule structure as an organisational frame. A compilation of the data in respect of each area (theme) explored in the interviews is achieved which facilitates comparative analysis. Like others, we live with the knowledge that future work may reveal our interpretation of this data as "premature history."[26] It may be more hopeful to conclude this section with a methodological point made by Ball (1994), worth quoting extensively: -

> *...actors' voices; elicited in the fieldwork for the study can be understood and interpreted in at least three different ways - the data is polyvocal.*
> *First, as "real stories"; as accounts of what happened; who said what, whose voices were important. What is of interest here are descriptions of events, the account of character and key figures, moments and debates "inside" policy, the practicalities.*
> *Second, as discourse, as ways of talking about and conceptualising policy, the discourses which speak policy and speak the actors (rather than the reverse). The assertions, judgements, axioms and interpretations of actors are central here....*
> *Third, as interest representation....this is data as indicative of structural and relational constraints and influences which play in and upon policy making....*
> *By engaging with direct evidence in this way we are also confronted directly with complexity, unable to gloss over contradictions and must face up to incoherence.*[27]

The Vocational Education Committee System in Ireland 1930 - 1990

The Vocational Education Act 1930 was debated and was passed by the legislature of the Irish Free State in the period May to November 1930 and came into operation in January 1931.

The Free State Government had established a Department of Education with a Minister for Education as a "corporation sole" under the terms of the Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924. Under this legislation, responsibility for Technical Instruction, as it had been established by the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act 1899, was transferred to the new Department and Minister for Education.

The Vocational Education Act, 1930 was a major reform and development of the Technical Instruction system then in place. An 1899 act of the United Kingdom Parliament established a system of Technical Instruction Committees throughout the island of Ireland, linked to the recently established local authority system, with power to plan, fund and administer a system of technical instruction in their area of operation. These Technical Instruction Committees were to be centrally co-ordinated by the then newly established

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26 A telling phrase used by McPherson & Raab op cit. p70, about their own work.

27 Ball (1994) "Researching Inside the State:Issues in Interpretation of Elite Interviews", in Halpin and Troyna (ed.) opcit. p109, Emphasis add(eds.)

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.[28] Technical Instruction was defined in the 1899 act as:

> *...instruction in the science and arts applicable to industries and in the application of special branches of science and art to specific industries and the practice of any trade or industry or employment.... and shall include... modern languages and commercial subjects...and shall also include instruction in the use of tools, and modeling in clay, wood and other material.*
>
> Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899,Section 30, (1)

The Vocational Education Act, 1930 (Number 29 of 1930) established thirty-eight (38) Vocational Education Committees in the twenty-six counties of the Free State. Each committee was based on a local authority area and the members were appointed by the authority with a minimum of five and a maximum of (in most cases) eight of its own elected councilors as members. The remaining members, to a maximum of fourteen (normally), were to be appointed by the council who

> *shall have regard to the interest and experience in education of the person proposed ... and to any recommendations made by bodies (including associations or bodies of employers or of employees) interested in manufactures or trades ...* [29]

The thirty-eight committees consisted of twenty seven (27) county committees (one of each of North and South Tipperary Ridings), four (4) County Borough Committees (Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick) and seven (7) Urban District Committees (one of which was Tralee VEC). These new Committees took over the property, staff and functions of the Technical Instruction Committees which they succeeded.

Duties and Functions

The VEC Act differentiated within vocational education to present three distinct concepts which taken together constitute "vocational education" for the purposes of the Act:

- Continuation Education
- Technical Education
- Higher Technical Education

"Continuation Education" is defined as: -

> *Education to continue and supplement education provided in elementary schools and includes general and practical training in preparation for employment in trades, manufactures,*

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28 In 1917 there were a total of 72 Technical Instruction Committees under the aegis of the Dept. of Agriculture and Technical Instruction: 33 County Committees, 6 City or 'County Borough' Committees and 33 Urban District Committees. Twenty of these Committees operated in those northern counties which after 1923 were in the jurisdiction of the Northern Ireland State. By 1930 there were 49 Technical Instruction Committees in the Irish Free State (twenty-six counties); 27 County Committees, 4 City or County Borough Committees, 16 Urban District Committees and 2 joint Agriculture and Technical Instruction Committees. Sources: Irish Technical Instruction Annual Report for 1917, p5 & p107; Dept. of Education Annual Report for 1929-30.

29 Section 8 (4), VEC Act, 1930

agriculture, commerce and other industrial pursuits, and also general and practical training for improvement of young persons in the early stages of such employment. [30]

The Act imposed a duty on all established Committees "*to establish and maintain in accordance with this Act a suitable system of continuation education in its area and to provide for the progressive development of such systems.*" [31]

In order to carry out the general duties thus imposed, committees were empowered by Section 32 of the Act which stated that:."....*every such committee may do all or any of the following things; that is to say:* -

(a) *establish and maintain continuation schools in its area;*

(b) *establish and maintain in its area courses of instruction in the nature of continuation education;*

(c) *assist in maintaining schools in its area in which continuation education is provided.*"

The Act further imposed a duty on committees which provide or maintain a continuation school or course of instruction,

attended by young persons who have a prospect of employment in a particular trade, business or occupation" to "*register and classify such young persons*" and "*to provide in the curriculum ... for the educational requirements of such young persons having regard to the nature of the said employment.*[32]

Continuation Education was defined in legislation by creating a contradistinction with "'elementary education as provided in primary schools." After a short period the need to distinguish it organisationally from the programme of the grammar/secondary schools was deemed necessary.

No formal legislative attempt to modify the definition of continuation education nor to replace the concept was undertaken in the period 1930 to 1990. In 1942 the Department issued an important memorandum (known as Memo. V.40) entitled "*Organisation of Whole-time Continuation Courses.*"[33] This document presents continuation education in a mode which sharply distinguished it in aims, content and clientele from general education provided in secondary schools. Twenty years later, this position was reversed. In 1963, Minister for Education, George Colley announced that the range of subjects which could be offered for the general education examinations i.e. the Intermediate Certificate and Leaving Certificates, was extended. From this date it became possible to include in these examinations curriculum areas which were hitherto characteristic of continuation education e.g. Woodwork, Metalwork, Mechanical Drawing and Rural Science. In addition, pupils attending whole-time continuation courses in VEC schools were permitted to sit for the general education examinations - the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate

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30 Section 3, VEC Act, 1930

31 Section 30, VEC Act, 1930

32 Section 33, VEC Act, 1930

33 Dept. of Education, Technical Instruction, Branch, (1942) Memorandum V.40: Organisation of Whole-time Continuation courses in Borough, Urban and County areas

Examinations of the central Department of Education.[34] These examinations had been introduced by the Free State Government in a 1924 re-organisation of the secondary examination system.[35] The Intermediate examination was a junior secondary examination taken after a programme of three to four years; the Leaving Certificate is taken at the conclusion of the a senior secondary programme usually lasting two years.

The national assessment and certification system for continuation education courses, "The Group Certificate", which had been introduced in 1947, continued to be available to pupils in Vocational school. The aim of a "*unified post-primary system*" in terms of curriculum was now explicit. In 1989 the Intermediate and Group Certificate examinations were both replaced by a Junior Certificate Examination common to all second-level school types. In curricular terms, the distinction between continuation and general education was no longer significant. Documentation from the Department of Education for 1985/85 shows the same pupils, enrolled in the same courses, in the same schools, listed in one publication as being pupils in "continuation education" and in another publication as pupils in "general education."[36]

In the period 1963 to 1990, the gap between continuation education and secondary or general education was institutionally bridged by the establishment of new types of school:Comprehensive schools in the period 1963 to 1973; Community Schools and Community Colleges in the period from 1973 to date. In the process of furthering these developments a significant amendment of the VEC Act 1930 was passed in 1970.

The Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1970 (Number 15 of 1970), empowered committees to co-operate with other persons maintaining a school recognised by the Minister, with the purpose to: -

(a) establish and maintain in its area a suitable system of continuation education and provide for the progressive development of that system

(b) establish and maintain in its area continuation schools and technical schools

(c) establish and maintain in its area such courses of instruction in the nature of continuation education and technical education as it considers necessary.

Section 1(b) (above) was utilised as the legal basis for the establishment of Community Schools and Community Colleges. Neither Section (a) nor Section (c) have been invoked to date.

The evolution of the concept of continuation education and the modifications to its import and significance in the course of the period in question are each central to an understanding of the VEC system and indeed

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34 Press Conference, 20/5/1963. Statement by Minister for Education Patrick Hillery, TD.

35 Dept. of Education Annual Report, 1924-25.

36 Dept. of Education:List of Post-Primary Schools 1984/85: Part III and Statistical Report 1984/85: Vocational Education, Table 1(b).

to the politics of Irish education. To understand and to explain the changes sketched above is central to the project of this study.

Technical Education

The second concept encompassed within Vocational Education by the terms of the Vocational Education Act 1930, is "technical education." Technical education is defined in this Act as:

> *education pertaining to trades, manufactures, commerce and other industrial pursuits (including the occupation of girls and women connected with the household) and in subjects bearing thereon or relating thereto and includes education in science and art (including in the county boroughs of Dublin and Cork, music) and also includes physical training.*[37]

Committees however, were not enjoined to establish technical schools or courses. Section 34, which outlines the general power of VEC in relation to technical education states that committees: -

> *... may do all or any of the following things, that is to say:* -

(a) *establish and mountain or assist in maintaining technical schools within its area courses of instruction in the nature of technical education.*

(b) *establish and maintain or assist in establishing and maintaining in its area courses of instruction in the nature of technical education.*

(c) *Contribute to the expenses incurred by persons resident in its area in obtaining technical education at schools or courses within or outside such area*
With the special sanction of the Minister, aid persons resident in its area in obtaining further education at technical colleges or central technical institutes or technical training colleges or other centres of advanced technical education within or outside such area.

The collation of data on Technical Education for the period 1930-1990 is difficult. The categories used to describe courses other than whole-time continuation courses show considerable variation over the period. (See also Chapter 7).

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37 VEC Act 1930, Section 4(i)

Table 1.1

Technical and Higher Technical Enrolments

	1932/32	1941/42	1951/52	1961/62	1971/72	1981/82	1991/92
Part-time Technical	30,768	20,796	7,444	3,955			
Evening Classes	22,879	29,435	60,546	57,810	50,471	121,474	99,018
Wholetime Technical				1,201	4,014		
Part-time Continuation				6,811			
Part-time Miscellaneous					10,651		
Part-time Apprentices					11,233	15,618	10,638
Wholetime VPT - 2nd Level						10,049	17,122
RTC & Tech. College						13,167	30,215
TOTAL	53,647	50,221	67,999	69,777	76,369	160,308	156,996

Source: Department of Education Annual Reports: Various Years

We have a division into - by *'Part-Time Technical Classes* Day' and *'Evening Classes'* for the first decades of the system. By 1971 it was possible to distinguish in between: *'Evening Classes'*- with 50,471 students *'Whole-time Technical Classes'* (which appear as a category for the first time in the Annual Report for 1952/53)[38] - with 1,201 students, 11,233 *Part-time Apprentice* students and 10,651 *'Miscellaneous Part-time students*. For the remaining decades after 1970,the establishment of "Regional Technical Colleges under the aegis of the VECs and the reorganisation of institutions in Dublin, Limerick and Cork some of which were known as Colleges of Technology or, in the Dublin case, aligned together organisationally as an "Institute of Technology" further complicates longitudinal analysis.

Table 1 gives an overview of the enrolment trends and the categories used to report them. The variety in nomenclature suggests problems of categorisation and definition. Examinations in Technical subjects, first introduced by the DATI in 1913, were administered with four levels of progression.[39] In 1929, a total of 5,915 examinations were taken, almost 4,000 at first -year level and a mere 109 at the fourth year level.[40] From the very beginning, the City and Guilds of London Institute examinations, The Royal Society of Arts,

38 See Dept. of Education Annual Report, 1952/53, p104 & 108.
39 See Dept. of Education Annual Report, 1924-25-26, p66.

London, the London Chamber of Commerce and Pitman's Shorthand and Typing examinations were also used.[41] In 1936, the first of a new set of examinations were taken: Trade Examinations of the Department of Education, at two levels - Junior and Senior, and Technological Examinations at Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels, each available to students either as examinations in individual subjects or as subject groupings appropriate to particular occupations.[42] The terms introduced by this examinations system differentiated between "Continuation Education"(for which a central examination was not introduced until 1947),"Trade" Education and "Technological" Education. In short it could be said that VECs were engaged in four forms of educational provision: Whole-time Continuation education; Trade and Craft education - usually part-time; Technological education, - (usually part-time, but from the mid 1950's, increasingly whole-time, and General Adult education- part- time.

Technical Education – Apprenticeship

Responsibility for the apprenticeship system, established by the Apprenticeship Act (1931), was located in the Department of Industry and Commerce. The main thrust of the Act was to permit the establishment of apprenticeship committees in designated trades. Section 26 of that Act however, included a provision that:

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> *26 - (1) An apprenticeship Committee may make representations to the Minister for Education with a view to the provision by the vocational education committee whose functional area is co-terminus with or included in or includes the district of such apprenticeship committee of courses of instruction in the nature of technical education of a type suited for apprentices engaged in the designated trade for which such apprenticeship committee is established, and that the Minister may, if having regard to all the circumstances he considers that effect should be given to such representations or any part thereof, forward such representations to such vocational education committee for its consideration*

Most trades did not operate these cumbersome provisions and, according to Coolahan, little was accomplished by way of apprenticeship education and training.[43]. Statistics on apprentices attending courses in VEC institutions were not collated separate from other forms of technical education in departmental annual reports until 1950. What statistics there are in Department of Education reports, bear out Coolahan's assertion.

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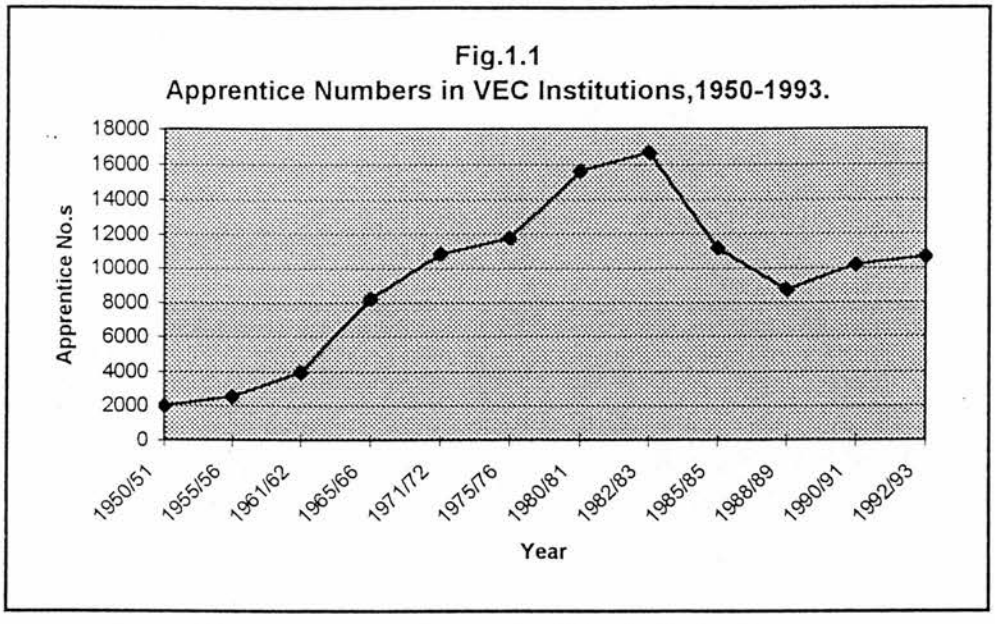
40 Dept. of Education Annual Report, 1928-29, p113.
41 ibid. p114 and Tralee VEC Prospectus, 1935/36.
42 See Dept. of Education Annual Report 1935/36, p80 ff.
43 Coolahan (1981) p101.

Figure 1.1

Apprentice Numbers in VEC Institutions

Note:Statistics for Apprentices attending courses in VEC institutions are not provided in Department of Education Annual Reports as a separate category until 1950.



Source:Annual Reports Department of Education: Various Years

In 1959, a new apprenticeship act established a body to be known as "An Cheard-Chomhairle" (Irish for "The Council for Trades"). Section 39 of this Act stipulated that An Cheard-Chomhairle may make arrangements directly with VEC committees for the provision of "*courses of instruction of a type ..... suitable for persons employed by way of apprenticeship*" The Act enabled the apprenticeship committee to require attendance at these courses as a condition of apprenticeship The Day Group Certificate of the Continuation courses became a requirement for admission to apprenticeship in the same Act. In 1967 however, the role of VECs in apprenticeship training was changed by the Industrial Training Act 1967 which, established an Industrial Training Authority, (AnCo), with primary responsibility for apprenticeship training. A distinction between apprenticeship *training* (off the job) which was to take place in the Authority's Centres,[44] and apprenticeship *education* (also off the job), emerged in the context of this act, to permit a continued role for VECs in apprenticeship training. These terms categories and institutions allowed the interest of VECs and those of the new training authority to be asserted and contested.

In the period immediately after 1963 there was development in other areas of technical education also. In that year, the OECD reported on the training of technicians in Ireland and strongly recommended improved facilities. A Departmental steering committee on technical education recommended in 1967 that new

colleges be established at Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Galway, Sligo, Dundalk, Athlone, Carlow and Letterkenny. They would provide senior cycle technical secondary courses within the Leaving Certificate framework, as well as apprenticeship and technician education for a wide range of occupations.

The report recommended the establishment of a national council of education awards to act as a validating and qualification awarding bodies for the regional technical colleges. This body was set up in 1972 as an ad-hoc *National Council for Education Awards* on the model of the CNAA in the UK. The NCEA Act was passed in 1982. In 1990, a second certifying body, ***-The National Council for Vocational Awards*** was established. It was to replace the service hitherto provided by RSA, City & Guilds and other certifying bodies utilised by the VECs. In 1995, a new, overarching National Certification Body-TEASTAS- has been announced to link all NCEA and NCVA certification work into a unified system.[45]

Higher Technical Education

The third element of vocational education provided for in the Vocational Education Act, 1930 was "Higher Technical Education. Section 38 (1) of the Act empowered VEC's for county boroughs (i.e.. Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick) to establish and maintain in its area a school to be known as a "day technical college" having for its main object: -

> *the provision of education in the general principles of science, commerce or art suited to the requirements of persons employed in positions of control or responsibility in trade or industry.*

This section of the Act was little utilised until approximately 1955 when, in the light of work at Colleges of City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee, a teacher category of "Higher Technological Teacher" was recognised in that committee.[46] The development of provision for apprentices and technicians in Dublin colleges took place in tandem with the provision of courses leading to the qualifications of professional bodies e.g. Architects and Engineers.[47] It is clear that the terminology of "higher technical education" was not at any time in general use and the distinction between it and technical education, created in the 1930 Act, appears to have been little used. By the mid-1960's the more significant distinctions were between "second-level" and "third level", and within third-level, a distinct category of institutions which collectively were known as the "Technological Sector", emerged. This consisted of the regional technical colleges and the six Dublin Colleges (organised by City of Dublin VEC) as the Dublin Institute of Technology in 1978, together with two new institutions outside the VEC system - the National

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44 By 1980, fifteen AnCo Training Centres had been established around the country. - Coolahan (1981) p284.

45 See 1997 Teastas Report to the Minister for Education.

46 OECD (1964) p72 reports the existence in CDVEC (City of Dublin VEC) of "Whole-time Technological Teachers" at three grades. The O'Donnell interview outlines the introduction of these categories of which he was one of the first appointees.

47 Based on interview with M.O'Donnell, Principal, Bolton Street College, Dublin; Director, Dublin Institute of Technology; and employed by City of Dublin VEC 1955-1992, when he transferred to D.I.T. under the terms of Dublin Institute of Technology Act, 1992.

Institute of Higher Education, Limerick, (NIHE, Limerick) and the National Institute of Higher Education Dublin, (NIHE, Dublin) established by separate legislation.

The Steering Committee which in 1967 reported on the establishment of the regional technical colleges did not recommend that they be established as part of the VEC framework. The establishment of regional education councils which might be responsible for all education was also suggested and the governance of the new institutions set in this context.[48] In the event, the colleges were established within the VEC framework, with Boards of Management which were sub-committees of the appropriate VEC, in accordance with Section 21 of the Vocational Education Act 1930. The Chief Executive Officer became Secretary to the Board of Management in each case, and all Board decisions were subject to ratification by the 'parent' VEC. The constraints of these technical arrangements, and the perceived or real disadvantages of working the VEC system and barriers to appropriate research and consultancy work, together became the basis of recommendations to take them outside the VEC system. [49] This resulted in the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992 and the Dublin Institute of Technology Act, 1992 which established autonomous governing bodies for these colleges and removed them for all practical purposes from the VEC system.

Some apprenticeship education and "non-third level" technical education remained in the school system that had developed from the day continuation schools[50]. From 1977, 'further education' type programmes (known as Pre-employment courses) were initiated by the Department of Education and promoted in vocational, comprehensive and community schools. In 1984, funds from the EC Social Fund were acquired by central government which supported these programmes. (which were revised and developed as Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes).[51] Within this framework provided by the Department of Education, VECs and their schools developed a range of initiatives in the 'Further Education' area.[52]

The foregoing sketch of the activities of vocational education committees has been organised around the core concepts of the 1930 Act, continuation education, technical education and higher technical education. The definitions of these terms were also used to legitimate the widespread development of an Adult Education Service. This service emerged from the part-time continuation and technical courses provided by committees. In 1969, a national association of adult education was established and in 1979 VECs were

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48 See Steering Committee on Technical Education (1967), Report to the Minister for Education on Regional Technical Colleges, Dublin: The Stationery Office. Prl.371.

49 See Report by National Board of Science and Technology - Barriers to Research and Consultancy (1985) Dublin:NBST and 'Technological Education: Report of the International Study Group to The Minister for Education, 1987'.

50 See FAS Reports for 1984 and 1986 which identifies apprenticeship provision in Vocational Schools in the following locations:Ballina, Mallow, Skibereen, Kilkenny, Drogheda, DunLaoire, Naas and Wexford.

51 See Dept. of Education 11/6/1984."Training Courses for Young People" and "Vocational Preparation Courses" June 1984.

52 For an indication of the range of these see Brown, A. and Fairley, J. (1993) Restructuring Education in Ireland: A Report:Appendix 4 p 88-131. The introduction of the term 'Further Education' into the official lexicon of Irish education is seen first in the budget documentation for 1988 when votes for "Second Level and Further Education" and "Third Level and Further Education" are presented. See Revised Estimates for Public Expenditure, 1988, Dublin, Govt. Publications, p101.

permitted by the Department of Education to appoint teachers to posts as "Adult Education Organisers." Committees were requested to appoint Adult Education Boards in 1985.

Scholarships and Grants

The VECs are empowered under Section 39 of the Vocational Education Act to establish scholarship schemes. This provision together with Section 34 (c) and (d) quoted above, provided the basis for a national system of VEC scholarships to the RTC and technological colleges since the 1970s. In 1991/92, VECs awarded grants totalling £2.9 million to 1,456 students in respect of maintenance and fee costs at Regional Colleges and Colleges of Technology. In addition VECs administered European Social Fund grants to a total of 22,671 students. Sixty percent of students in receipt of student support grants in 1991/92 were provided for through the VEC systems' administrative framework.[53]

Structures and Relationships

The legal entity under the VEC Act 1930 is the committee. Decisions are taken by committee at meetings which must be held each month, other than the months of July, August and September.[54] Practice appears to be that meetings are held every month except August.

Between meetings, the Chief Executive Officer acts on behalf of the Committee "*for the due performance of its powers and duties.*" Memorandum **V 53** outlines the responsibilities of the CEO as Educational, Administrative and Financial. Unlike the position in other Irish local authority institutions, there are no "*reserved functions*" which are prerogative of chief executives independent of their committee.[55]

Staff are either officers (*teachers and administrative staff*) or servants (*clerical and maintenance/technical staff*). These terms link the VEC's with the general local authority employment categories. School Principals (or Teachers - in charge or Headmaster in earlier usage) report to the CEO on educational, administrative and financial matters. Sub-Committees acting as advisory boards for sub-county areas have been in existence from early years.[56] In 1974, Minister Burke encouraged the establishment of Boards of Management by VEC's for vocational schools.[57] Section 21 of the Act also provides for the establishment of sub-committees which are free to act without the requirement to submit its decisions for ratification. This provision has not been much used. Two Boards of Management, both established in amalgamation

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53 See Statistical Report of Dept. of Education, 1991-92, Table 3, Grants, Scholarships and Loans, p157.
54 Section 13. (3).
55 Section 13 (3). See O'Halpin and Bannon (1991) City and County Management 1929-1990. I.P.A. Dublin.
56 See O'Reilly (1989) for reference to sub-committees in South Tipperary VEC, 1943.
57 See Dept. of Education, Circular Letter 73/94 15th July 1974. In the 1994/95 school year an internal IVEA survey indicated 55% of vocational schools had Boards of Management. Source: Personal communication from IVEA General Secretary, 20.10.1995.

situations, operate under this provision:Causeway, Co. Kerry and Oldcastle, Co. Meath.[58] The Boards of Management for 'agreed' Community Colleges in the 1980's and 1990's do not operate under this provision.

The contracts of employment of staff in all cases, however, identify the committee as employer and the chief executive as the executor of the will of the committee.

Section 40 of the VEC Act provides for committees to act co-operatively for the conduct of their business. The most significant manifestation of co-operative action is the Irish Vocational Education Association (The IVEA), which is the national representative body of VEC's. With its origins in the Irish Technical Instruction Association established in 1902, this body represents the VECs collectively at the national conciliation conferences for teachers which deliberate on teachers pay and conditions since 1957.[59].

In the period 1930-1980, IVEA was administered largely through the offices of Chief Executive Officers as honorary officers. In 1980 the association appointed a full time professional general secretary, with office staff. In 1986, it acquired its own premises. The relationships between committees and IVEA are significant for any examination of change and stability in the VEC system. The annual IVEA congress is the forum at which VEC collectively articulate their concerns, through congress resolutions. The guest speakers in their persons and the themes they address are key indicators to the ideational base on which VEC's operated at any particular juncture.

Two further sets of relationships are critical to the politics of the vocational education system: those with the Minister and Department, those with the Local Authority system and those with the Churches.

Department of Education

The VEC Act 1930, like most of its contemporary Irish legislation, is highly centralist in character. A survey of the Act identifies thirty-nine specified requirements on the committee to seek either prior approval or sanction from the Minister for Education for the performance of its functions. The effect of these requirements is to link closely the personnel of the Department of Education with those of the VEC's in the negotiation of all aspects of the system and its development. In this relationship the history of that section of the Department of Education dealing with VEC's has its own significance. Originally established as a branch of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (1899), the Technical Instruction

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58 Information supplied by the relevant CEOs indicates that practice in these schools has come to conform with the more general provisions of the Section.

59 The Irish Technical Instruction Association was formed in 1902. At the Annual Conference in Sligo, 1929 a new constitution was adopted and the organisation became "The Irish Technical Education Association." In 1944 it became the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA). A conciliation and arbitration mechanism for VEC teachers was first agreed in 1957 and IVEA became the official representative of the employers at that forum.

Branch (TIB) had particular difficulties at the time of the transfer of power in 1922.[60] The Branch did not fully transfer into the Department of Education until 1927 and has retained a dogged distinctiveness within the Department for much of the time since[61]. The dissolution of a special Vocational Section in 1970 significantly affected the interface between Department and VEC. In examining the relationships between VECs and the Department of Education the relative importance of human agency and personality, on the one hand, and organisational structures and wider socio-cultural contexts, on the other hand, are difficult to disentangle.[62] Also of importance is the role of the Department of Finance (the Treasury) in its relationship with the Department of Education, and in the views held in Finance on such matters as central/local authority relations, the role of education in the state generally, and more particularly, the role of vocational education in the economy. Also significant are the relationships between the broader local authority structure and central government, both in their party-political and in their administrative aspects.

Local Authority

As mentioned above, a central element of the relationship is the role of the local authority in the composition and in the formation of each committee. The Act stipulates that committees are appointed by local authorities, that they are dissolved when local authorities are dissolved, and that there are minimum numbers of council members nominated to membership of the VEC. Both interview data and an analysis of committee membership presented here suggest that over the years, there was a further strengthening of the links of VEC's to the local party political system with the development of a trend for local authorities to appoint party activists or notables to membership of VEC's on the basis that these are persons with an "interest and experience in education."[63]

The relationship is established for staff superannuation purposes in Section 25 of the VEC legislation. More significant, however, are the relationships established by Part IV of the Act on the finances of Vocational Education Committees. This portion of the Act established the local authority as the rating authority for vocational education and provided for annual local contributions by the rating authority on an initial basis of "three pence in the pound of the ratable value in the pound." The section also provided that the VEC members, who were also local authority members, would constitute an "estimates sub-committee" with the power to veto any proposed increase in the annual local contribution. The link between raising local contributions and membership by elected representatives is clearly established. Successive amendments to the Act were introduced to allow the maximum rate in the pound to be adjusted upwards

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60 See Susan Parkes: George Fletcher: "The Man from the Department", Irish Education Decision Maker, No. No.4, 1991, pp42-47.

61 According to O'Buachalla the TIB was not integrated into the Department of Education until 1927 despite the legislative provision made in 1924, (O'Buachalla, 1988, opcit., p373, citing National Archive File:Finance, S18/11/31). The Technical Instruction Branch continued to be so known internally until 1970. By 1955, IVEA was referring to it as "Vocational Education Section" in IVEA Minutes. In 1970 the section was merged with the Secondary Branch to form a new "Post-Primary Branch."

62 In Part 4, the study will attempt to identify those points at which the role of a 'policy entrepreneur' was critical to educational change and points at which the institutional, cultural context absorbed and neutralised the impetus for change.

from three pence in 1930 which raised £71,634 until the total figure raised in 1988/89 was £2.5m.[64] In 1990 the figure dropped dramatically and the ratio of local to central funding dropped from a high of 53% (1941/42) to a low of 0.2%.[65]

The symbolic and the practical significance of these changes have been little adverted to, to date.[66]Matters began to change with the expansion of the 1960's, when the increased expenditure in education created an unrealistic demand on local revenue generating ability if it were to keep pace with earlier proportions. The local contribution dwindled in significance even more when in 1977 rates on domestic property were removed and the generation of local authority revenue from rates was largely replaced by a central government grant.

Churches

The third of the major relationships referred to is that with the Churches, particularly the Roman Catholic Church. These relationships find no formal expression in the legislation. It may be useful to consider the relationships in terms of three dimensions (a) the churches as owners and managers of virtually all school institutions, other than those established under the VEC Act, (b) religious education in vocational schools and (c) the churches, and particularly, the Roman Catholic Church, as powerful social institutions in Irish society. Guarantees given to the Catholic hierarchy prior to enactment of the VEC Act 1930 first came to the public domain in 1981.[67] The Minister, John Marcus O'Sullivan wrote to Bishops ensuring them that:

> *... the schools to be provided under this act are distinctly not schools for general education. General education, at the age of 14 years will continue to be given in primary and secondary schools. When we can afford to make more universal a system of general education for post-primary pupils it cannot be through the medium of these continuation schools.*

The Minister also claimed to the Bishops that:

> *I was most careful to secure that no new principle of control in education should be introduced in the Act.*

Data on Committee membership currently available shows how clergy were incorporated into the committee system in the early decades.[68] The decline in clerical participation in committees appears to coincide with the establishment of comprehensive schools, community colleges and boards of management

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63 See Section 8 (4), VEC Act, 1930.

64 Dept. of Education Reports:1931/32 and 1988/89.

65 Dept. of Education Reports: 1941/42, and 1990/91.

66 The White Paper on Education:"Charting Our Education Future" (1995) cites changes in the balance of local to central funding as an argument for VEC reform, p 177.

67 See Coolahan (1981) p97 and p296. Coolahan, one of the few to have access to Department archives brought the existence of a letter from the Minister for Education, J.M. O'Sullivan to the Bishop of Limerick 31/10/1930, to public notice. The letter has been the subject of much comment since and is reproduced in full in O'Buachalla (1988), p399-403. The existence of the letter first became known when White (1971) reported being told of its existence by a former Minister for Education, Gen. Richard Mulcahy, in interview. See White, J. (1971) Church and State in Ireland, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, p38, & 377.

68 See Logan (eds.) (forthcoming) Historical papers on VEC teacher union history - to be published by Teachers Union of Ireland, Dublin.

for vocational schools, with a significant decrease in the numbers of religious people in the teaching service and in a putative decline in Church influence. The impact of influence by church authorities can be found in significant elements of Memo V.40, (1942). In 1979, the line of thought in that document is completed with a memorandum on "Religious Instruction in Vocational Schools"[69] which argued

> *1.1* *The expression "continuation education" is defined in Section 3 of the Act as meaning "education to continue an supplement education provided in elementary schools."*
>
> *1.2* *As religious instruction is a fundamental part of the programme of National schools, it follows that it should also, with due regard to the rights of parents, form an equally important part of the programme in vocational schools. Vocational education committees should, therefore, provide facilities for religious instruction ... It is suggested that the time given to such instruction should in general be of the order of two hours per week.*

The nature of the relationships between church and state, church and education, and church and the vocational education system, with the changing dynamic of these relationships are central in the examination of the politics of Irish education.

Summary

In this Chapter, an introductory overview of the relationships and functions of the VEC system has been presented. In addition, the research questions for the study have been identified in terms of: one, an appropriate characterisation of the Irish education system as a mono-integrated national system in which the establishment of the VEC system is an assertion by state managers leading to segmentation and competition and to a subsequent period of attempted systematisation. This Chapter also presents the assumptions and the vantage points that operate for this study, central to which is the view that education systems and subsystems have a measure of autonomy and are not mere reflections of other social phenomena. No functional role of an education system carries sufficient explanatory power to explain the change processes of education.

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69 Dept. of Education Circular Letter 7/79. Religious Instruction in Vocational Schools 23/2/79.

PART 2

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY: AN EXAMINATION OF LINKS

The Chapters in Part 2 will present the outcomes of the literature review undertaken during the study on the relationships between Education and Society. In Chapter 2, the focus is on the 'political nexus'; in Chapter 3, the focus is on the 'economic nexus'. This section presents the literature review on the political economy of education carried out as part of the study. The categories and frameworks presented provided the bases for the assembly and interrogation of the empirical material presented in Part 5.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY: THE POLITICAL NEXUS

Varieties of Discourse

In 1994 the *'Journal of Education Policy'* published a special issue with the title "The Study of Educational Politics'.[1] Taken with the series of yearbooks of the Politics of Education Association from 1987 to 1993,[2] these volumes provide evidence of a growing community of international scholars who address the subject matter of the politics of education. Halpin and Troyna (1994) brings together the working concerns of U.K. based researchers currently examining education policy change. From these volumes it is possible to glean an informed overview of the current issues which exercise the English speaking research community who focus attention on the politics of education. Charles Raab (1994) comments on "the intersection of political

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1 Scribner, J.D. & Layton, D.H. (eds.) (1994) Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 9 Nos. 5-6, Sept-Dec. 1994. "A Special Issue:The Study of Educational Politics; the Commemorative Yearbook of the U.S. - based Politics of Education Association 1969-1994. The Politics of Education Association was established as a sub-set of AERA in 1969. 'The PEA at 25"; - a brief history in J. Education Policy. Vol. 956, p V1-V111.

2 Boyd & Kercher, eds (1987) 'The Politics of Reforming School Administration:Mitchell Goertz (1989) Education Politics for the New Century"; Fuhsman & Malen (1990) Politics of Curriculum and Testing; Cibulka, Reed & Wong, eds (1991) 'The Politics of Urban Education in the United States':Marshall (ed), (1992) 'The New Politics of Race and Gender' and Adler & Gardner, eds (1993) 'The Politics of Linking Schools and Social Services. All published as special issues of the Journal of Education Policy for the respective years. The Journal of Education Policy was founded in January 1986 to provide a forum for the examination of the "broad fabric of the educational system in all its facets:with a particular interest in historical analysis and in comparisions across societies and cultures...." and subjecting every aspect of the policy process to academic analysis." J. Education Policy Vol. 1. No. 1, 1986, Editorial p1.

science and educational studies in the formation of perspective upon education policy."[3] Raab contends that in British academic discourse there is a large gap between the study of politics and education and that

> *for the most part, political scientists have eschewed education as a substantive field or sector, whether on a descriptive level or as a terrain on which to develop or adapt theories of power, conflict, consensus, ideology or other political or governmental phenomena....*[4]

Kogan, with his "indispensable and prominent work (e.g. Kogan, 1975 and 1978)." Salter and Tapper (1981) and Ranson (1985) are cited among the relatively small number of U.K. based authors as having contributed in diverse ways to the description, understanding and analysis of education politics, government and policy.[5]

Dale (1994) also perceives the dual academic roots of education policy studies, in political studies on the one hand, and in sociology, on the other.[6] What Raab, a political scientist, sees emerging is a common academic discourse, "*if education policy sociology shares methods and premises with political science and its cognate disciplines.*"[7] From political studies comes a concern with power, influence, conflict, consensus and ideology; concern with the state and civil society; pluralist, market and network explanatory models for control and governance. From sociology comes concern for knowledge and the curriculum as a social construct, for the processes of social reproduction and for equality related issues. In their formulation, education policy studies or the politics of education is a hybrid of the specialisms of 'policy studies' in political discourse and 'policy sociology' in sociological discourse and shares premises and methods with both.[8] Much of the 'policy sociology' perspective has, according to Raab (1994) and to Troyna (1994), strong links with a sociology of knowledge, influential in the 1970's and 1980's (e.g. Young, 1971; Young & Whitty 1970; Sharp, 1980; Apple,1985 and Dale, 1989,) and frequently referred to as 'critical theory'.[9]

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3 Raab, C. (1994) "Where We are Now:Reflections on the Sociology of Education Policy" in Halpin & Troyna (eds), opcit p17-30.

4 ibid. p19.

5 ibid. The Kogan works cited are:Kogan, M. (1975) Educational Policy Making, London, Allen & Unwin, & Kogan, M. (1978) The Politics of Educational Change, Manchester, Manchester University Press & Glasgow, Fontana. Salter, B. & Tapper, T. (1981) Education, Politics and the State, London, Grant McIntyre. The work by Ranson which he cites is Ranson, S. (1985) 'Contradictions in the Government of Educational Change', Political Studies, 33, 1, pp56-72. To these might be added Kogan & Cordingley (1993) 'In Support of Education:The Functioning of Local Government', London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, Kogan, M. (1994) 'Models of Educational Governance' in Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 13, p253-264, and Ranson, S. (1994) Towards the Learning Society, London, Cassell. Ranson describes this work as the first part of a project "theorizing the developing government and politics of post-war education"; Preface, p(x). Ball, S.J. (1991) Politics and Policy Making in Education, London:Routledge, is another significant addition to the list.

6 See Raab (1994) opcit p23. and Dale (1994) 'Applied Education Politics or Political Sociology of Education:Contrasting Approaches to the Study of Recent Reform in England and Wales" in Halpin & Troyna, (eds.) opcit p31-41.

7 Raab, (1994) opcit 27.

8 ibid. On policy studies see for example 'Haim & Hill (1993) The Policy Process in the Modern Capitalist State', 2nd (eds.) London; Harvester/Wheatsheaf. MacPherson & Raab subtitle their 1988 work on the Governance of Education in Scotland as "A Sociology of Policy since 1945."

9 Raab (1994) opcit p20-21; Troyna (1994) 'Critical Social Research and Education Policy', British Journal of Educational Studies, 42, 1, pp70-84. Young, M. (ed) (1971) Knowledge and Control, London:Collier:MacMillan, Young, M. & Whitty, G. eds; (1977), Society, State and Schooling, London:Falmer Press. Sharp, R. (1980) Knowledge, Ideology and Politics of Schooling:Towards a Marxist Analysis of Education, London, RKP, Apple, M. (1985) Education and Power, London, Ark and Dale, R. (1989) The State and Education Policy, Milton Keynes, OUP, Dale (1994) speaks of the "dominant project of the sociology of education, which essentially includes a commitment to changing rather than merely analysing education."

Such education policy sociology is very like critical social research "sans political commitment", or at least with less dogmatic commitment. But conceptions of the state and its relation to education as well as its stances concerning knowledge and the curriculum are basically "rooted in various tendencies within Marxist thought"[10]. A recurring theme in much of the literature providing an overview of education policy studies or education politics, whether from the political studies domain or the sociology of education perspectives, is the need for a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies for assembling relevant data and a disparagement of "*small scale empirical studies [that] continue to pile up while questions of broader theoretical interest remain unexplored.*"[11] There is a need to move beyond description and engage with wider theoretical issues including the relationships between structure, culture and agency in social interaction and change, and the integration of micro-level (studies of individual actors or institutions) and macro-level or systems studies, (Dale,1994; Raab,1994). There is an apprehension about 'disciplinary parochialism' in which education as a policy area is seen as so singular that work in other cognate areas is of no relevance, (Archer,1989; Raab,1994; Dale,1994). There is a search for multi-disciplinary approaches and an apprehension re ethnocentrism with a realisation of the value of cross-national or comparative studies. (Cibulka,1994.)

In addition to politics and sociology as root disciplines, two further sets of contributors to the discourse on the politics of education may be discerned. One is from the older tradition of the historians of education and a second from the more recent discipline of curriculum studies.

United States historical work such as that of Cremin (1976, 1988) and Franklin (1986) and Kirk and Jensen (1986), U.K. work such as that of Simon (1974), Silver (1983) and comparative historical work as in Muller, Ringer & Simon (eds) (1987)[12] all show how historical tools in recording and analysing change join

> *with their other social and political science partners in imposing order on detail, employing concepts which organize their data, bounding their sequences and selections with the limitations and opportunities of theory and contributing back to it, and using or explicitly formulating strategies of understanding and explanation.*[13]

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10 To use Raab's (1994) phrase:opcit p21.

11 Karabel & Halsey (1977) 'Education Research:A Review and Interpretation' in Karabel & Halsey (eds) Power and Ideology in Education, New York:Oxford University Press, as quoted by Raab, opcit p28. The overviews referred to here are Raab, 1994, and Dale 1994, already cited and Wong, K.E. (1994) 'The Politics of Education:from political science to multi-disciplinary inquiry, in J. of Education Policy, Vol, 9, 5-6, p21-38, and Chibulka, J.G. (1994) in the same issue p105-126. See also overview and six county reports in Beare, M. & Lowe Boyd, W. (1993) Restructuring Schools:An International Perspective on the Movement to Transform the Control and Performance of Schools, Washington, Falmer Press and Power, S. (1992) 'Researching the Impact of Education Policy Difficulties and Discontinuties', Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 7, No. 5, pp493-500.

12 Cremin, L.A. (1976) Traditions of American Education, New York, Basic Books, Cremin, L.A. (1988) American Education: the metropolitan experience, 1876-1980, New York, Harper & Low, Franklin, B.M. (1986) Building the American Community:The School Curriculum and the Search for Social Control, Philadelphia, Falmer. Kirp, D.L. & Jensen, D.N. School Days, Rule Days:The Legalization and Regulation of Education, (The Stanford Series on Education and Public Policy) Philadelphia & London, Falmer, Simon, B. (1974) The Politics of Educational Reform, 1920-1940, London, Lawrence & Wishart; Silver, H. (1983) Education as History10/11/95 Interpreting Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Education, London: Methuen and Muller, Ringer & Simon (eds) (1987) The Rise of the Modern Educational System: Structural Change and Social Reproduction 1870-1920.

13 From Silver, H. (1990) 'Education, Change and the Policy Process, London, Falmer, p1.

In a general survey of the relationships and potential complementarities and parallels between history and social studies as accounts of social change, Burke, (1992), points to the borrowings among the social science narratives across the disciplines of history, anthropology, sociology and politics.[14] Silver (1990) claims for the historians of education that they

> *have persistently rediscovered that established accounts of the educational past have misrepresented, under-presented or ignored some of the vital actors - children, girls, teachers, parents, communities...[and] has become involved with changing and often profoundly controversial concepts and vocabularies - disadvantage and privilege, success and failure, teaching and learning...selection and inequality.*[15]

Anderson (1983), 'Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland'[16] may be read in this light as may Hamilton (1989),[17] with, however, a more strongly theoretical concern. Hamilton's work with its origins in his concerns with classroom teaching and curriculum issues,[18] links with work on education policy which has its genesis in curriculum studies. The development of curriculum studies as a discipline led to attention to the political dimensions of curriculum. This is well illustrated in the work of Lawton whose conception of curriculum as 'a selection from the culture' spanned works such as (1983) Curriculum Studies and Educational Planning to the more recent and directly politically concerned (1992) Education and Politics in the 1990's:Conflict or Consensus.[19] This deepening of concern, from 'technical' issues of curriculum planning to the structural and the political dimensions, can also be detected in a range of publications:e.g. Horton & Raggatt (1982), Lawn & Barton (1981) and Pinar (1975).[20] Historical studies of school curricula (Goodson (eds.) (1985); McCullock, Jenkins & Layton (1985) and Goodson (1983)] provide another strand of theorising on the politics of education[21] as they trace the social histories of curriculum subjects.

Finally, the U.S. literature (Scribner & Layton (eds.) 1994; Wong, 1994; Cibulka 1994; Boyd and Kerchner eds, 1987; Adler and Gardner, eds 1993) link the development of policy studies and the politics of education movement with the post-graduate programmes in education administration, (Fowler, 1994 p91). This strand of education studies linked the literatures of economics and organisation theory to

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14 Burke, P (1992) History and Social Theory, London, Polity Press.

15 Silver, H. (1990) opcit p3.

16 Anderson, R.D. Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

17 Hamilton, D. (1989) Towards a Theory of Schooling, London, Falmer.

18 See Hamilton, D. (1990) Learning about Education, An Unfinished Curriculum, Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

19 Lawton, D. (1983) Curriculum Studies and Educational Planning, London, RKP; Lawton, D. (1992) Education and Politics in the 1990's:Conflict and Consensus, London, Falmer.

20 Pinar, W. (ed) (1975) Curriculum Theorizing:The Reconceptualists, Berkeley, McCutchan Publishing Co., Lawn, M. & Barton, L. (eds) (1991) Rethinking Curriculum Studies, London, Croom Helim; Horton, T. & Raggatt (eds) (1982) Challenge and Change in the Curriculum, Sevenoaks, Hodder and Stoughton.

consideration of education policy change. Chubb and Moe (1990), Marshall, Mitchel & Wirt (1989) and Wirt & Harman (1986) illustrate the trend of this work.[22]

Policy studies in education have a number of disciplines contributing to the main flow:politics, sociology, history, curriculum studies and organisational studies. The wide range of paradigms and assumptions inherent in this complexity make the field a daunting arena for review. This complexity does however allow for an mutually enriching interplay of approaches which are available for mapping the intricacies of modern education institutions.

Scribner & Layton, (1994) suggest a range of policy levels or arenas of educational decision-making for analysis[23]. This study of the vocational education system attempts a descriptive characterisation of the Irish education system at the level of system, i.e.- the national level. Such a characterisation may be approached in a variety of ways. The current major OECD research project, 'Indicators of Education Systems [OECD (1992), OECD (1994), & OECD (1995)] indicates the importance attached to the characterisation of education systems for comparative, evaluative and policy making purposes.[24] This large scale ongoing international project employs a basic framework of 'Contexts', 'Inputs', 'Processes' and 'Outputs' - alternatively stated as Environment, Resources, Processes and Effects. This basic framework is utilised to build an array of empirical indicators to characterise the system.[25] A fundamental dilemma in the construction of such indicators is that "*complete and rigorous knowledge of the education system, of a kind that would allow the construction of effective indicator systems, cannot be attained for epistemological as well as economic reasons.*"[26] Nonetheless, the process of identifying indicators to substantiate or call into question a posited explanatory framework, cannot be evaded. However, the 'measurement theory' used to claim validity and reliability for the indicator adopted also requires to be made explicit and to be.

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21 Goodson, I.F. (1983) School Subjects and Curriculum Change:Case Studies in Curriculum History, London, Croom Helm; Goodson, I.F. (ed) (1985) Social Histories of the Secondary Curriculum: Subjects for Study, Lewes:Falmer; McCullock, G., Jenkins, E. & Layton, D. (1985) Technological Revolution? The Politics of School Science and Technology in England and Wales since 1945:Lewes, Falmer

22 Wirt, F.M. & Harman, G. (1986) Education Recession and the World Village:A Comparative Political Economy of Education, London, Falmer Press, Chubb & Moe, T., (1990) Politics Markets and America's Schools, Washington, K. Brookings Institution. Marshall, C. Mitchell, D. & Wirt, F. (1989) Culture and Policy in the American States, New York, Falmer Press. Fowler, F.C. (1994) 'The International Arena: the Global Village in Journal of Education Policy, 9, 5-6, p89-104.

23 Scribner & Layton eds (1994) p39-105, suggest a range of school, local, state, federal and international or global arenas, for purposes of analysis.

24 OECD/CERI (1992) The OECD Intervention Education Indicators:A Framework for Analysis' Paris, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation,
OECD/CERI (1994) Making Education Count:Developing and Using International Indicators, Paris, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
OECD/CERI (1995) DecisionMaking in OECD Education Systems, Paris, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
OECD/CERI (1995(6)) Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators, Paris, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation

25 OECD/CERI (1992) p19. See Bottain & Walberg (1992) 'What are International Education Indicators For? OECD/CERI pp7-12; Nuttal (1992) 'The Functions and Limitations of International Education Indicators', OECD/CERI (1992) pp13-24 and Bottain & Tuijnman (1995) 'International Education Indicators: framework, development and interpretation' OECD/CERI (1995) pp21-36; Fasano, C. (1994) 'Knowledge, ignorance and epistemic utility:issues in the construction of indicator systems'. OECD/CERI (1994) pp55-78.

26 Fasano (1994) opcit p72.

authenticated in turn. The possibility of infinite regress looms immediately and can only be short-circuited by accepting an operational paradigm.[27] A recurring problem for this study is the range of explanatory models that operate on different paradigmatic bases, which are difficult to integrate. Thus Hopper (1968) presents a typology for the classification of education systems built around three linked system characteristics in respect of (a) the Selection processes and differentiations developed in the system, (b) the provision of Instruction for the various categories of person created by the selection process and the Allocation of system graduates to other institutional settings or to occupational roles. These characteristics all focus on the differentiation processes used by an education system. Hopper suggests the key questions to characterise an education system are:

(i) **How** does educational selection occur?

(ii) **When** are pupils initially selected? and

(iii) **Why** should they be selected? [28]

Of the contemporary studies which present characterisations or descriptive overviews of the Irish education system [e.g. Akenson (1975), Randles, (1975), Coolahan (1981), Mulcahy (1981), Greaney & Kellaghan (1984), O'Buachalla (1988), Lynch (1989)] only one, Greaney & Kellaghan 1984, has employed Hopper's scheme, and then only in a minor way.[29] Given the focus in contemporary Irish educational discourse on 'equality of educational opportunity' and social mobility as important policy domains, [Whelan & Whelan (1984), Breen, (1984), Breen & Whelan (1991), Breen & Whelan (1992)], this is somewhat surprising.

The descriptive model developed by Hopper does not attempt to capture the evolving changing characteristics of education systems over time. The work of Archer, (1971, 1973, 1979, 1981) provides an explanatory model and related conceptual framework in which the primary focus is the politics of system change. The development of state education systems is characterised as being in two major cycles, (Cycle One, leading to the emergence of a state educational system either centralised or decentralised in its decision making; Cycle Two leading to various patterns of incremental change or restructuring) with key

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27 See Gilbert, N. (1993) 'Research, Theory and Method' in Gilbert, N. (eds.) Researching Social Life, London, Sage, p26-29 for a useful discussion of this point reflected also in footnote no. 5 above, p5. The use of the term 'paradigm' here is as in Kuhn's influential presentation of it:Kuhn(1962) 'The Structure of Scientific Revolutions', Chicago, University of Chicago Press. O'Sullivan, D. (1989), (1992) & (1993) examine the relevance of the concept of 'paradigms' in education policy studies.

28 Hopper, E. (1968) "A typology for the Classification of Educational Systems" reprinted in Hopper, E. (ed) (1971) Readings in the Theory of Educational Systems, London, Hutchinson, pp91-110.

29 See Greaney, V. & Kellaghan, T. (1984) Equality of Opportunity in Irish Schools:A Longitudinal study of 500 students, Dublin, The Educational Company of Ireland, see pp7, 31-34. To the list of studies mentioned here could be added all of the ESRI published studies.

process concepts such as "Assertion" and "Dominance," "Monopoly and "Mono-integration", "Restriction" and "Substitution."[30]

As mentioned above, this framework has been utilised by O'Buachalla (1989) as an interpretative, explanatory model.[31] Work that has built on that of Archer, as for example, Ringer (1979) and Muller (1988), have not, to my knowledge, been cited to help understand the contemporary Irish education system. The twin concepts of "systematisation" and "segmentation" are elaborated by these authors in a way very helpful to a consideration of an educational subsystem, such as the VEC.[32] For Muller, it is

> *only when various school forms or educational institutions are interconnected, when parts of the system are related to each other and their functions interdefined, should one have recourse to the concept of a system.*[33]

In this corpus of work it is posited that educational systemisation encompasses three phases;

(i) the term 'system emergence' refers to as yet unrelated developments in initially autonomous areas (individual school types, for example) that anticipate the later system;

(ii) the "constitution of the system" refers to the integral organisation of all parts of the system, their functional articulation and classification;

(iii) the term 'system complementation' refers to the rounding-out of the constituted system through modification of existing forms, through integration of areas not yet codefiable at the time of the system's constitution, or through the establishment of new institutions in pursuit of objectives unforeseen at the time of the system's constitution.

The data assembled here will allow a characterisation of the Irish education system utilising the conceptual frameworks referred to just above. The data assembled in respect of the Contexts, the Resources, the Processes and the Outputs of the Vocational Education Committee system in the period 1930-1990 allow us to evaluate the explanatory capacity of these frameworks as applied to Irish education, while seeking to integrate or locate them in a complementary relationship with key concepts from sociological and historical analyses of Irish education. It is argued that a state education system is but incompletely constituted (to use

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30 Archer, M. & Vaughan (1971) 'Domination and Assertion in Educational Systems' in Hopper, E. (ed) 1971, opcit p56-70:Archer, M. & Vaughan, M. (1973) Social Conflict and Educational Change, 1780-1850, Cambridge University Press, Archer, M. (1979) The Social Origins of Education Systems, London, Sage, and Archer (1981) 'Educational Politics:a model for their analysis in Broadfoot et al (eds) Politics and Educational Change', London, Croom Helm, pp29-56.

31 O'Buachalla, S. (1989) opcit pp311-340.

32 See Ringer, (1979) opcit and Muller, D.K. (1987) 'The process of systematisation:the case of German secondary education" in Muller, Ringer & Simon, (eds.) The Rise of the Modern Education System', Cambridge, C.U.P pp15-52, and Ringer (1987) 'Segmentation:the case of French secondary education", in the same collection, pp53-87.

33 Muller, (1987) opcit p16.

Ringer/Muller terminology) or still emergent (to use Archer's terminology). Competitive conflict, segmentation, and systematisation, restriction and substitution are processes, each of which is in operation. The Irish education system is, paradoxically, simultaneously, highly centralised on some dimensions and highly decentralised on others. The outcome of the current change processes of educational reform (in the mid 1990's) will decide whether the centralising or the decentralising tendencies will predominate for the future.

This study argues that the establishment of the VEC system may be seen as an 'assertion' by state managers against the dominance of churches in Irish education. It is posited that the VEC system was established as a "substitute" form of post-elementary or secondary school provision in a private, mono-integrated education provision and thereby introduced a further 'segmentation' into the Irish education system. Does the available evidence support a characterisation of the internal politics of Irish education 1930-1990 (what Dale (1994) terms 'education politics' as opposed to the 'politics of education)[34] as a period of competitive conflict leading to a (present) period of education systematisation. To what extent is the available evidence consistent with a characterisation of the changing fortunes of the VEC system as an arena of conflict between 'centralising' and 'decentralising' tendencies in Irish educational and general politics?

The above set of questions are located in the internal politics of education, what Dale terms 'education politics'. In the paper cited above, Dale argues that 'education politics' cannot be understood or explained without a more or less explicit reference to and appreciation of the 'politics of education'

> *Where education politics is the dominant focus there is an evitable tendency to take the boundaries of education as settled and the agenda for education largely for granted. The constitution, as opposed to the content, of the agenda is rarely regarded as a matter of great significance or deserving of close attention. There may be some attention paid to any more obviously 'educational' aspects of the constitution process, or some record to the broader background features (such as the 'decline of the welfare state' or 'the rise of the New Right') but little beyond this.*[35]

Ball (1991) and Kogan (1975) are linked by Dale as studies which accept the given boundaries of education in their data gathering. Most studies of Irish education could have the same charge levelled. As suggested in Chapter 1, the politics of education is fundamentally the process and structures through which macro-societal expectations of education as an institution are identified and interpreted and constituted as an agenda for the education system and this study attempts to delineate these processes and structures in

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[34] See Chapter 1, Note 12.

respect of Irish society. The data assembled in respect of external contexts (Part 3) and the range of interviews conducted (incorporated in Parts 4 & 5) reflect this objective. In the paper referred to above, Dale interestingly advocates a recognition of an unavoidable role for "the State", for "the Market" and for "the community" (or social networks or civil society) in the co-ordination and delivery of the agenda of education. He suggests that the point is,

> *not to seek to establish which one of these sets of institutions and practices and their associated modes of social co-ordination is in operation in the education sphere at any given time. It is rather to recognise that all three are always present in different combinations and to seek to discover the nature of the current form of that combination, the factors affecting it and its implications for education policy and practice.*[36]

Dale's distinction between 'education politics' and 'the politics of education', is reflected in the concept of 'high politics' presented, for example, by Guthrie & Koppich (1993). For these authors the staple issues of 'high politics' are such matters as: 'Expanding hopes of worldwide democratization, East-West detente, efforts to diffuse religious conflict and intense global economic conflict."[37] These are the issues that preoccupy government leaders and around which states orient much of their strategic planning. These issues constitute today's "high politics." For the most part the politics of education is much less visible. Conventional education issues, in this framework, "rarely penetrate the rarefied air of high politics." The politics of education "typically is concentrated on issues of an incremental nature and is dominated by the historic triangle of interest group representatives, executive branch education officials and a narrow band of legislators who specialize in education."[38] The authors suggest, however, that periodically education bursts the bubble of its subordinate and self-contained political arena and becomes high politics. A set of appropriate background conditions, a triggering event, and a "political champion" are the requirements for moving from the normal politics of education to the 'high politics of structural change'.[39]

To link this hypothesis with Dale's analysis, the high politics of education is engaged in on those occasions when the "macro-societal" expectations of education as an institution are being re-interpreted.[40] When Guthrie & Koppich pose the question as to 'Why there is a widespread presence of education reform as a

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35 ibid. p35.

36 ibid. p38. For an extended discussion of the role of Markets, Networks and State bureaucracies see, Thompson et al, eds, (1991) Markets, Hierarchies, & Networks:the Co-ordination of Social Life, London:Sage & OUP, especially 'Introduction', p1-21.

37 Guthrie, J.W. & Koppich, J.E. (1993) "Ready, A.I.M., Reform:Building a Model of Education Reform and High Politics" in Beare, H. & Lowe Boyd, W. (eds, (1993), Restructuring Schools:An International Perspective on the Movement to Transform the Control and Performance of Schools, Washington:Falmer. pp12-29. Three issues, The 'National Question', Economic Development and Church-State relations have provided the staple diet of high politics in Ireland throughout the twentieth century.

38 ibid. p13.

39 ibid. p13.

40 ibid.

subject of high politics in recent years.'? they come up with the simple answer - "modern economics." "It is the human capital imperative that is driving widespread national education-reform efforts."[41] They proceed to outline a theoretical perspective on the political dynamics of education reform which posits three conditions of major policy change:an 'alignment', 'initiative' and 'mobilization'. 'Alignment' requires that four politically related phenomena be in harmony:

(1) the deep-seated public-policy preferences of the society

(2) the current position being identified as politically problematic and

(3) an alternative policy being 'to hand' and

(4) a 'favourable politics'.

When these are aligned, then a "window of opportunity for change exists."[42] But to take advantage of the 'window' a mobilizing force is necessary to initiate and to carry through the process. Here they refer to "policy entrepreneurs", mobilizing individuals or cohesive groups who are advocates of change and who recognise the window of opportunity. Guthrie & Koppich then proceed to present a number of research propositions, deduced from their theoretical discussion which they suggest are 'capable of being operationalised for a particular national policy setting and tested with empirical information."[43] From these the following are adopted for the purposes of this study: [44]

- Education change is a lagged political system response to social disequilibrium
- Education reform is likely to occur during periods of value disequilibrium, not during periods of value dominance, during times of value ambiguity, uncertainty or shift
- Education change is likely to be a response to a politically recognised problem
- Reforms expressed as policy options will have been circulating in the environment and the initial groundwork will have been laid for its acceptance
- The probability of a proposed education change being enacted is positively related to the degree to which proponents can shape its particulars to appear consistent with ascending public value preferences
- Education reforms depend crucially upon the existence of a 'policy entrepreneur, an individual or set of individuals who champion the change and attempt to maintain reform momentum.[45]

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41 ibid. p13.

42 ibid. p19-25. This analysis draws substantially Kingdon, J.W. (1984) Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies, Boston, Little Brown. See also Guthrie, J.W. & Koppich, J. (1987) 'Exploring the political economy of national education reform' in Journal of Education Policy, Vol 2, No. 5, p25-47.

43 ibid. p25-26.

44 ibid. p26-27.

45 Of policy entrepreneurs, Kingdom (1984) p129, says:"..their defining characteristic.is their willingness to invest their resources, time, energy, reputation and sometimes money - in the hope of a future return. That return might come to them in the form of policies of which

The work of Guthrie and Koppich with its emphasis on "deep-seated policy preferences" of the society which stresses the role of the political system in mediating and reconciling the multifarious wants, hopes and desires of groups and individuals in the light of a dominant set of values[46] leads us to "a cultural framework" for the study of state education policy as presented in Marshall, Mitchell & Wirt (1989).[47] The framework they present has two central propositions:

(a) culture shapes institutions and traditions, and

(b) culture is reflected in written and unwritten codes of behaviour.[48]

The "cultural paradigm" focuses on the cultural views and meanings held by agents or actors in the policy arena; systems of meanings constitute culture and culture is expressed in patterns of behaviour. Like Guthrie & Koppich, Marshall, Mitchell & Wirt, (1989), draw on the work of Easton (1953) and his "seminal notion of policy making as the authoritative allocation of values and resources for a society:a policy consists of a web of decisions and actions that allocates values."[49] Marshall et al present a taxonomy of state policy mechanisms which will allow the tracking of policy action over time (and indeed between states). It is argued that the

> *model of public policy making developed through the cultural paradigm, suggests how "culture remains stable even though it is continuously undergoing transformation.*

The Model presented has three major domains.

(a) Those Cultural Variables affecting Policy, i.e. Historical facts, Constitutions, existing statutes and regulations, Political practices, Institutions and Political Culture,

(b) The sub-culture of the Policy makers, i.e. their shared understandings about
   (i) what is desirable in the political culture
   (ii) policy alternatives available
   (iii) policy priorities
   (iv) the power and influence of different groups
   (v) assumptive worlds, and
   (vi) values, and

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they approve, satisfaction from participation or even personal aggrandizement in the form of job security or career promotion. They could be in or out of government in elected or appointed positions, in interest groups or research organisations.

46 ibid. p17-18. This is the basic position adopted by Cordingly & Kogan (1993) opcit see p9-10.

47 Marshall, C., Mitchell, D., Wirt, F., (1989) Culture and Education Policy in the American States, New York, Falmer Press.

48 ibid. p5.

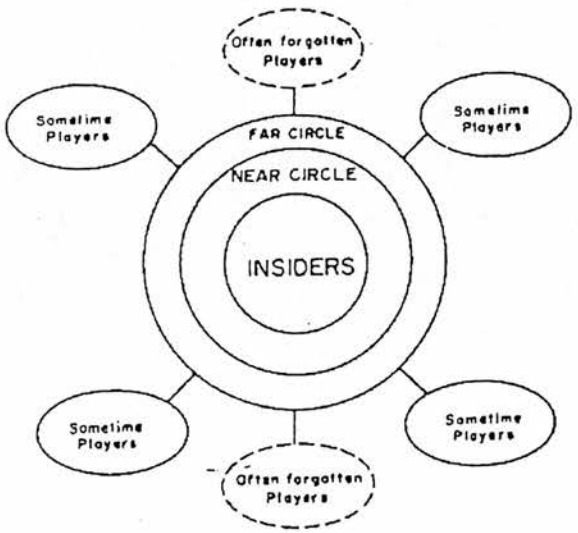
49 ibid. pp5-6. Easton, D. (1953) The Political System, New York, Alfred A. Knopf.

(c) the Policy Choices made in respect of items for policy attention, the relative priority between values, the policy choices made, the new regulations or legislation enacted and the allocation of resources.[50]

Three aspects of this model will be particularly useful for this study. The first is the focus on Policy makers and their shared understandings. The empirical data in this study locates the actors in education policy in a range of U.S. Stage legislatures into five categories, most effectively presented diagrammatically.

Figure 2.1

A Model of Power and Influence in Education Policy-making



From Marshall, Mitchell & Wirt (1989) p19

This conceptualisation of the 'policy community' expands significantly the analytical value of that concept as utilised by McPherson & Raab (1988).[51] It is proposed to test the usefulness of this scheme on the data of this study in respect of policy making for the VECs and to attempt an identification of the 'insiders', 'near circle' 'far circle' the 'sometime players' and the 'forgotten players'. A second aspect of the model of interest is the pivotal role assigned to *"assumptive worlds in action."*[52] Drawing on the contributions of political science, social anthropology and sociolinguistics to the elaboration of the concept, Marshall et al.

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50 Ibid. p7.

51 See McPherson & Raab (1988) opcit p403 f.f.

52 Marshall et al (1989) opcit p52.

posit that "*stories....tell us how power is distributed in our society. The story both creates and displays a universe of 'facts' and values. We are able to ground our construction of life because the story tells us what 'is' and what ought to be.....*"[53] The assumptive worlds are revealed by policy-makers words and stories about policy making. Their data was policy actors words which in their "*modes of expression, of obfuscation and of bias*", provide a key to understanding their cognitive maps and assumptive worlds. *Any model or theory of education policy making must incorporate the assumptive world concept. Indeed this concept touches and coheres the other elements of the policy making world.*[54]

Figure 2.2

The Subculture of State Education Policy-makers

Assumptive Worlds' Fit with Other Approaches to Understanding Policy-making

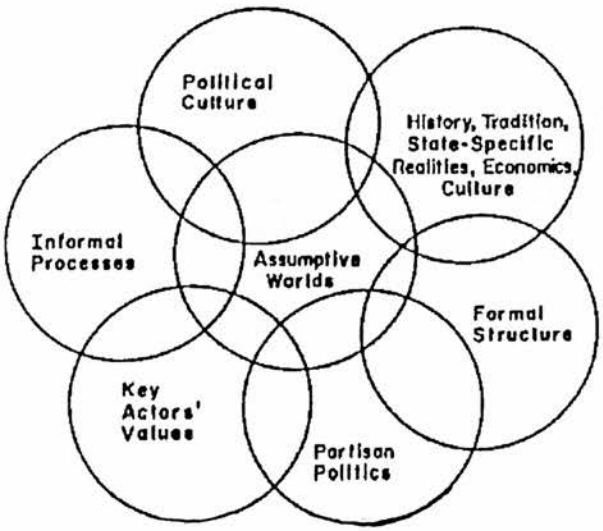

Figure p53 - from Marshall et al (1989) p53

The 'stories of policy-making' illuminate specific assumptions such as the following: - 'Who has the right and responsibility to initiate policy?, What policy ideas are deemed unacceptable?, What policy mobilizing activities are deemed appropriate? and what special conditions apply in their particular policy community.[55] Members of a policy community have been socialized into the sub-culture having learnt the values, behaviours and choices that are possible. This reference to the role of values is the third point in the Marshall et al model that is worthy of note here. In an examination of the "core values of state policy actors", they argue that public policy-makers rely on the core values of their culture in forming overall

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53 ibid. p36.

54 ibid. p36, 53.

55 ibid. p35.

judgements about various proposed courses of action.[56] They identify the four core social values that guide an American policy maker behaviour in the late twentieth century as: Choice (or Liberty), Quality, Efficiency and Equity.

These values are, they suggest, in tension or in competition with one another. Historical shifts in the goals of education are seen as having been responses to shifts in the relative priority given among the completing values.[57] It is suggested that cultural values are differentially embedded in the statutes of different U.S. states: in democratic systems all four are pursued, but not with an even hand.

How have these values been operationalised in the policies of the Irish education policy community and in the VEC system in VEC system in particular? The data assembled will allow judgement to be made on these matters.

Ideology and values find expression in policy and practice, providing direction, justifications and inspiring solidarity. As it is argued here that the value related and ideological perspectives of policy participants are critical to the policy options deemed to be available and chosen, the literature review will necessarily be concerned with questions of the values and ideology that provided the milieu for the development of the VEC system. It is appropriate therefore to include in this section with a note on the key concepts of 'culture' and 'ideology'.

A Note On 'Culture' And 'Ideology'

> *Where culture meant a state or habit of the mind or a body of intellectual or moral activities, it means now, also, a whole way of life.*
>
> Raymond Williams (1958) **Culture and Society**, p18

> *Far from being a placid realm of Apollonian gentility, culture can even be a battle-ground on which causes expose themselves to the light of day and contend with one another, making it apparent that, for instance, American, French, or Indian students who are taught to read their*

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56 ibid. p88.

57 ibid. p92.

national classics before they read others are expected to appreciate and belong loyally, often uncritically, to their nations and traditions while demigrating or fighting against other.

Edward W. Said (1993) **Culture and Imperialism.**

Williams(1983) describes culture as one of the two or three "most complicated words in the English language"[58]. Having traced the roots of the word and its introduction into discourse, and having alerted us to the mutations in its usage in different languages, he suggests that there are three distinct usages of the term in modern social discourse: -

(1) culture as "a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development"

(2) culture as "a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general", and

(3) culture as the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity."[59]

The first came into common usage in the eighteenth century with the notion of a "person of culture" or 'cultivation'. It would appear to combine notions of personal sensibility and exposure to the "high order concerns of civilized society and to be closely related to the outcomes of a *'liberal education'*. Culture as the 'way of life' would appear to have many points of contact with the term ' cultural nationalism' which is reflected in the quotation from Said above and which will figure prominently in our discussion of Irish society below. (See Part 3.) Finally, the third sense of the term 'culture' is frequently rendered as "high culture" and would appear to be the sense of term when used to refer to music, literature, painting, sculpture, theatre and film and also, sometimes, philosophy, history and scholarship generally.[60] In his preface to 'Ireland:A Social and Cultural History 1922-1985', Brown(1986) offers the following indication of what he deems to be the appropriate subject matter of his title: -

... ideologies, ideas, symbols, literary and cultural periodicals, even lyric poems are social facts, just as potato crops, tractors and new industries are, and they can only be fully understood within the material world in which they come to life. ...for much of the period, certain ideas, images and symbols provided Irish people with part of their sense of national identity.[61]

Introducing his major study of contemporary cultural change, Inglehart(1990) presents culture in the following terms:

The peoples of different societies are characterised by enduring differences in basic attitudes, values and skills. In other words, they have different cultures....The incentives that motivate people to work, the issues that give rise to political conflict, people's religious beliefs, their attitudes concerning divorce, abortion and homosexuality, the importance they attach to having

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58 Williams, R. (1983) Keywards:A Vocabulary of Culture and Society - revised edition London:Fontana, p87-93. Also:Williams, R. (1981) Culture Glasgow: Fontana, p10-14.

59 Williams, (1983) p90

60 ibid.

61 Brown, T. (1986) Ireland:A Social and Cultural History, 1922-1985, Glasgow, Fontana, p9.

children all these have been changing. One could go so far as to say that throughout advanced industrial society, what people want out of life is changing. Each culture represents a people's strategy for adaptation.[62]

The focus in this interpretation on "attitudes, values and skills" points to the centrality of educational processes to culture as understood by Inglehart. It is clear, therefore, in considering the contexts of the vocational education system in Ireland 1930-1990, that the term 'culture' will be used to include each of these senses identified by Williams above, i.e, culture as 'states or habits of mind', as 'a body of intellectual or moral activities, as a 'whole way of life', and as the 'battleground on which causes expose themselves to the light of day and contend with one another.'

In this reading, 'ideology' may be seen as a sub-set of culture. In his guide to the origins of the term 'ideology', Williams identifies it being imported from Post-Revolutionary France, and as having a specific nineteenth century German usage, (as in The German Ideology by Marx and Engles, 1845-1847)[63]. It's original uses carried a strongly pejorative and negative connotation as a "*diffuse metaphysics which in a contrived manner seeks the primary causes and on this foundation would erect the legislation of peoples, instead of adapting the laws to a knowledge of the human heart and the lessons of history...*"[64]

This accusatory tone, suggesting that ideology in some way is based on abstract analysis and is not sufficiently informed by the burden of pragmatic realities, continues to accompany the use of the term ideology in political discourse[65]. This pejorative sense is added to by the Marxist tradition in which

> *...ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker, consciously indeed, but with false consciousness...he imagines false or apparent motives*"[66]. The ruling ideas of any epoch "*are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas*" ; '*...the material life-conditions of the persons inside whose heads this thought process goes on, in the last resort, determine the course of this process remains of necessity unknown to these persons, for otherwise there would be an end to all ideology*[67].

In the Marxist tradition then ideology is 'illusion, false consciousness, unreality', to be swept aside by the relentless impact of scientific materialism.

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62 Inglehart, R. (1990) Cultural Shift on Advanced Industrial Society, Princeston, N.J. Princeston University Press p3.

63 The account of the early usage of the term ideology presented by Williams (1983), p153-157, is corroborated by Thompson, J.B. (1984) in Studies in the Theory of Ideology, Cambridge; Polity Press, p1-9.

64 Attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte in his criticism of the Enlightenment 'ideologies', in Williams (1983) opcit p154.

65 Williams gives examples from Carlyle and 19th Century British politics:This view is also found in contemporary tensions in Irish politics. See McDowell (Irish Times, 18/3/97) asked 'Is ideology alive in Irish politics', replied, 'Yes. Take education, I believe that a government not involving Labour would not attempt to impose on the country 10 eduation boards...'. Fitzgerald (Irish Times, 26/4/97) argues that '...when emotions and ideologies come into play in the political arena, rationality goes out the window, and the consequences of this can often be extraordinarily negative and destructive.'

66 Engels in Letter to Mehring, 1893, quoted by Williams (1983) opcit p155.

67 ibid.

Thompson (1984) presents a related, if less dismissive conception of ideology which he refers to as a critical conception of ideology. In this critical conception ideology is "*essentially linked to the process of sustaining asymmetrical relations of power, that is to the process of maintaining domination...*" To study ideology, suggests Thompson, "*is to study, in part, the ways in which the creative, imaginary activities serve to sustain social relations which are asymmetrical with regard to the organisation of power*"[68]. There are two basic elements in this conception:firstly, ideology is a construct; secondly, ideology "*serves to sustain relations of domination.*" Drawing on the work of Habermas, Thompson(1984) suggests that ideology sustains relations of domination through "communication which is systematically distorted"[69]. This conception is close to Althusser's(1984) dictum:"*Ideology is a 'Representation of the Imaginary Relationship of Individuals to their Real Conditions of Existence*'[70]. With Habermas, Thompson (1984) resists the view that ideology is pure reason[71] but because of the central role of language in the communication and creation of ideology, they suggest that ideology can be interrogated by 'discourse analysis' undertaken from a 'critical' perspective which "*shows how discourse serves to sustain relations of domination*"[72].

This range of 'negative' conceptions of ideology can be contrasted with a "neutral" conception. A simplified version of this position is presented in Morishima (1990) when he defines ideology as " a system of beliefs which binds people together into a social grouping"[73]. This is a view which Thompson characterises as assuming that

> *"ideology operates like a sort of social cement, binding the members of a society together by providing them with collectively shared values and norms*"[74]

He goes on to deem this notion of ideology as inadequate :

> *There is little evidence to suggest that certain values or beliefs are shared by all, (or even most) members of modern industrial societies ...in so far as they are are stable social orders (they) are stabilised by virtue of diversity of values and beliefs and the proliferation of divisions between individuals and groups. The stability of our societies may depend, not so much upon a consensus*

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68 See Thompson (1984) p5-6. The term 'social imaginary' is taken from the work of Cornelius Castoriadis and Claude Lefort (to mean "the creative and symbolic dimension of the social worlds, the dimension through which human beings create their ways of living together and their ways of representing their collective life" p6. See p303-304 for relevant references to works of Castoriadis and Lefort.

69 ibid. p5. See also Burke, P (1992) History and Social Theory Oxford:Polity, p95 which work also examines the differences between Manheims concept of 'mentalities' and various concepts of ideology. See p90-94.

70 Althusser, L. (1984) 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in Essays on Ideology', London, Verso, p36.

71 Thompson (1984) p5. In this work Thompson proposed a procedure for the 'interpretation of 'ideology' c.f. p10-11, p173-204. For a similar 'hermeneutic' approach see Ricoeur, P (1981) Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press esp p63 ff. and 222ff. Also Brand, A., (1990) The Force of Reason:An Introduction to Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action', Sydney:Allen & Unwin

72 Thompson (1984) opcit p11.

73 Morishima, M. (1990) "Ideology and Economic Activity" in Martinelli, A. and Smelser, N.J. Economy and Society:Overviews in Economic Sociology, London:Sage for the International Sociological Association, p51.

74 Thompson. (1984) opcit p5.

concerning particular values and norms but upon a lack of consensus concerning particular values where oppositional attitudes could be translated into political action.[75]

In this formulation ideology is a purely descriptive term and relates to systems of thought, or system of belief and 'symbolic practices which pertain to social action or political projects'.

The following extended quotation from Therborn presents this conception at its fullest:

> *It (ideology) will not necessarily imply any particular content (falseness, misrecognition, imaginary as opposed to real character), nor will it assume any necessary degree of elaboration and coherence. Rather it will refer to that aspect of the human condition under which human beings live their lives as conscious actors in a world that makes sense to them in varying degrees. Ideology is the medium through which this consciousness and meaningfulness operates. The consciousness of every new-born human being is formed through largely unconscious psychodynamic processes and it functions in and through a symbolic order of language codes. Ideology, however, is not, reducible to either of these.*
> *Thus the conception of ideology employed here deliberately includes both everyday notions and 'experience' and elaborate intellectual doctrines, both the consciousness of social actors and the institutionalised thought-systems and discourses of a given society. But to study these as ideology means to look at them from a particular perspective:not as bodies of thought or structures of discourse per se, but as manifestations of a particular being-in-the-world of conscious actors, of human subjects. In other words, to conceive of a text or an utterance as ideology is to focus on the way it operates in the formation and the transformation of human subjectivity.*[76].

Keller (1994) proposes an approach to the examination of educational ideologies that usefully modifies that outlined by Therborn. In Keller's view, educational ideologies *'.. are a response to the human need to find coherent meaning for educational action and to seek justification for the control and categorisation of subject-matters and methods of education.'*

> *These he suggests are not matters of truth, but of 'verisimilitude'. 'For an educational ideology's capacity to bestow meaning, provide justifications, inspire solidarity for action, and direct educational organisations (through selection, control, and categorization processes) is not founded on truth. Rather, these effects are achieved only when educational-ideological texts are generally accepted by the public; this acceptance is accomplished by a verisimilitude that is "planted" inside the educational-ideological texts and in the socio-cultural habit of giving credence to them. They are accepted as true, and so become "true" in their effects.'*[77]

This general position which does not automatically impute a conspiratorial stance to ideological statements yet acknowledges the need to critically interrogate them, is the position adopted to ideology in this study. The openness of ideology to be used as a means of assertion and even of dominance - operating in the cause of vested interest - is acknowledged. The potential for political and social programmes which do not seek domination or the imposition of "asymmetrical relations" is also retained. A concern for 'revelation

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75 ibid.

76 Therborn, G. (1980) The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology, London:Verso, p2.

and justice' is not the preserve of either storytellers nor critical theorists; it can reasonably be expected to appear in the communications of poets, politicians, priests or philosophers in about equal measure. [78] It would of course be foolhardy to approach all ideological discourse with the assumption that it was neutral or emancipatory in terms of its impact on social relations[79].

Education Policy Research in Ireland

As cited above, both Logan (forthcoming) and Coolahan (1984) refer to the dominance of historical work in Irish educational studies. Much of this work such as Coolahan (1981), McElligott (1966) and Randles (1975) is descriptive, organised on a chronological basis with little or no explicit theoretical or interpretative analysis. Logan has drawn attention to the influential role of Timothy Corcoran, S.J., (Professor of Education at University College, Dublin, 1909-1939) in promoting the study of education and particularly the history of education.[80] Corcoran's interest was the development of state policy towards education in the period from 1536-1831. According to Logan, he placed education at the front line of a battle between two cultural traditions. "*English state policy in Ireland, he argues, consistently sought to use education as an instrumentiem regni for the racial, religious, political and cultural assimilation of Ireland with England, under the exclusive control of an Anglican ascendanc.y.*"[81] Education politics in Ireland is primarily an arena of contest between a colonial and a native culture, polity and religion. Social and economic considerations are of relatively minor significance. This focus of analysis can be detected in historical work relating to more recent periods (Atkenson,(1975), Titley, (1983),Farren,(1996), in which the arena for examination is the role of state, religion or churches and (to a lesser extent) cultural identity, in the politics of education.[82] Neither political nor social theory is explicitly invoked to enhance understanding of the phenomena being reported. Among historical works, O'Buachalla (1988) is exceptional in explicitly addressing theoretical issues relating to the policy processes in Irish education. Adopting a decidedly pluralist stance, O'Buachalla asserts that:

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77 Keller, H. (1994) 'The Text of Educational Ideologies: Towards a Characterisation of the Genre' in Educational Theory, Winter 1994, Vol 44, No.1. pp27-43, p29.

78 The phrase 'revelation and justice', and the idea in this passage are prompted by O'Donnell, M. (1994) 'Images of Family'. The Writers' Response: Challenge, Acceptance or Revenge' in Logan, J. (ed) With Warmest Love:Lectures for Kate O'Brien 1984-1993, Limerick, Meelick Press, p137.

79 Habermas in Knowledge and Human Interests, trans. J.J. Shapiro, London:Heinemann (1974) suggests three basic "interests" in social communication: - "Technical Control", which is the language of the world of work, the "Practical Interest" which is the language of social interaction, and "Emancipation" which is the interest of 'critical sciences'. See Pusey, M. (1987) Jurgen Habermas, London:Tavislock. p24.

80 Logan, (forthcoming), opcit p4-7. See also Deegan, J. (1981) 'An Assessment of the Contribution of the Rev. Prof. Timothy Corcoran, S.J. to the development of education in Ireland'. Corcoran was also a considerable influence in the Department of Education.

81 Logan, opcit p5.

82 Akenson, D.H. (1975) 'A Mirror to Kathleen's Face:Education in Independent Ireland, 1922-1960, Montreal; McGill-Queens University Press.
Titley, E.B. (1983) Church, State and the Control of Schooling in Ireland, 1900-1944, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan. Farren, S. (1996) The Politics of Education in Ireland 1920-1965, Belfast:Institute of Irish Studies, The Queen's University of Belfast. This perspective is also the

Public policies can thus be viewed as reflecting the dominant value of the society or 'as statements of the balance of power between societal groups. Changing policy stances result from changes in the power structure or in the value allocation which operates in the society'. Throughout the course of this century, the power structure in Irish education has not changed substantially, while the number of participant groups has increased, the relativities introduced by the new groups have not altered the power relationships.[83]

O'Buachalla provides synoptic descriptions of the policy initiation, formulation, implementation and termination (or change) processes. He uses Archer's (1978) concepts of mono-integration and dominance/assertion to characterise the relationship of churches (particularly the catholic church) and the state in education policy making.

In the domain of curriculum studies, Mulcahy, (1981), 'Curriculum and Policy in Irish Post-Primary Education', examines the historical changes in curriculum policy in Irish second-level schools, employing *'philosophy, history and literary criticism' as his mode of analysis and discussion'*. This significant work does not however address the political processes of curriculum decision making.[84] Other work in the curriculum domain, (e.g. Crooks & McKernan, 1984) confine themselves to a descriptive approach.[85] Irish educational policy formation is directly addressed in Mulcahy & O'Sullivan, eds, (1989) with a focus on the period 1963-1985. With one exception, all the papers therein, however, are descriptive, and in Archer's terms 'ethnocentric', showing little willingness to present the potential of comparative material or broader theoretical issues.[86]

For example, in an informative account of school reorganisation involving Co. Cork VEC, 1963-83, Owens foregoes the opportunity of comparing his account and analysis with Hargreaves' (1983) analysis of re-organisation in West Riding of Yorkshire, 1958-64.[87] Familiarity with this work would also have provided a lucid link and insight into the Pluralist/Marxist debate in education politics, as well as an imaginative framework for the integration of these perspectives. Similarly, Barber (1989), which examines the

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frame for O'Flaherty, L. (1992), Management & Control in Irish Education; The Post Primary Experience, Dublin, Drumcondra Teachers' Centre.

83 O'Buachalla, S. (1988) Education Policy in Twentieth Century Ireland, Dublin, Wolfhound Press, p319. This work has its origins in a Ph.D. Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics at Trinity College, Dublin. See Hogan, P & Herron, D. (1992) Register of Theses on Educational Topics in Universities in Ireland:Vol. 2. p60.

84 Mulcahy, D.G. (1981) Curriculum and Policy in Irish Post-Primary Education' Dublin Institute of Public Administration, p4. For a review of this work see O'Reilly, B. (1983) Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp21-32.

85 Crooks, T. & McKernan, J. (1984) The Challenge of Change:Curriculum Development in Irish Post-Primary Schools, 1970-84, Dublin Institute of Public Administration. For a general essay on the relative neglect of political studies in Irish Education see O'Reilly, B. (1995) 'Economics, Politics and the Philosophy of Education in Ireland', in Hogan, P (ed) Partnership and the Benefits of Learning, Maynooth, Educational Studies Association of Ireland, pp12-28.

86 Mulcahy, D.G. & O'Sulivan, D. eds (1989) Irish Educational Policy:Process and Substance, Dublin Institute of Public Administration. For 'ethnocentrism' see Archer (1989) opcit p250ff and Dale (1984) opcit p33.

87 Hargreaves, A. & Tickle, L. (1980) Middle Schools origins ideology and practice, London and Hargreaves, A. (1983) The Politics of Administrative Convenience: the case of middle schools' in Ahier, J. & Flude, M. (eds). Contemporary Education Policy, London, Croom Helm, pp23-88.

implementation of comprehensive schooling in Ireland 1963-86, while it places comprehensivisation in Ireland in a larger international context, presents little or no theoretical analysis of the political processes around the development and implementation of the policy.[88] Nor have political scientists in Ireland shown much attention to the politics of education. The study of politics as a discipline has developed rapidly in recent decades. But the study of the politics of education as a specialism is still very much an untilled field.[89] The politics of education has begun to receive some attention in Ireland recently in the context of the extended consultations and debate which surrounded the publication of a Green Paper in Education, (1992) and White Paper (1995). In 1991, the Educational Studies Association of Ireland conducted a symposium at its annual conference on the subject of 'Educational Research in Ireland, the Decade Ahead' with a session on "Research on Policy Issues." In 1993, a further symposium on educational research and the implementation of change was held, together with a special conference on the theme of "Governance in Education."[90]

Referring above to Mulcahy and O'Sullivan,(eds.) (1989) I suggested that all of the papers therein, with one exception were descriptive, and ethnocentric, showing little willingness to explore the potential of comparative material or broader theoretical issues. The exception is O'Sullivan's paper, 'The Ideational Base of Irish Educational Policy'.[91] This work, and subsequent work by O'Sullivan (O'Sullivan, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996)[92] provides an extended examination of Irish education policy from the perspective of critical theory in sociology. O'Sullivan's work is strongly theoretical and analytical, using policy statements and published official documentation as his primary data. His work, together with that of Lynch, (Lynch, 1982, 1985, 1987, 1988(a), 1988(b))[93], which is more firmly in the neo-marxist tradition,

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88 Barber, N. (1989) Comprehensive Schooling in Ireland, Broadsheet No. 25, Dublin, Economic and Social Research Institute. This work may be contrasted with the more politically aware Reynolds, D. et al The Comprehensive Experiment: A Comparison of the selective and non-selective system of school organisation:London, Falmer.

89 For an account of the development of political studies as an academic discipline in Ireland see:Committee of the Political Studies Association of Ireland (1992) Political Science in Ireland, Limerick, PSAI, and Coakley, J. (1991) 'Political Science in Ireland:Development and Diffusion in a European Periphery' in European Journal of Political Research, No. 20, pp 359-373. An overview of the current state of the academic study of politics in Ireland can be gleaned from:Coakley, J. & Gallagher, M. (eds.) (1993) Politics in the Republic or Ireland, Dublin PSAI; and Hill, R. & Marsh, M. (eds) (1993), Modern Irish Democracy, Dublin, Irish Academic Press. See note re O'Buachalla (1989) as cited above, footnote 73.

90 See Irish Education Studies, Vol. 11, 1993, p165-175:and Irish Education Studies, Vol. 13 for papers by Kogan (1984) Models of Educational Governance, p253-264, Cordingley, 'In Support of Education: the Functioning of Local Government, p265-281.

91 Mulcahy & O'Sullivan (1989) opcit p219-274.

92 See O'Sullivan, D. (1991) 'Legislating for Education. Some Political Issues "Irish Education DecisionMaker, No. 3, pp 45-48.
- (1991) 'Cultural Strangers and Educational Change:The OECD Investment in Education and Irish Educational Policy', Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 7, No. 5, pp445-470.
- (1993) 'The Concept of Policy Paradigm:Elaboration and Illumination "Journal of Educational Thought":Vol. 27: 3, 1993, pp246-272.
- (1994) 'Hands up all in favour of Inequality' Irish Educational Policy and Equity', Studies, 83, 330, pp 199-1988.
- (1996) 'Cultural Exclusion and Educational Change: Education, Church and Religion in the Irish Republic,' in 'Compare' Vol. 26, No.1, 1996, pp35-49.

93 - (1985) 'Counter Resistances in Education:An Examination of the Relationship between State Managers, Social Classes and Educational Mediators' Paper presented at International Sociology of Education Conference, Birmingham.

provide the largest corpus of critical work on Irish education policy. Significant additional work, on educational policy, also in the sociological tradition and with a strongly empirical approach, has been produced under the aegis of the state research agency, the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI). Commencing with a report on Irish educational expenditure (1978), the Institute has published a number of reports using pupil and school survey data together with extensive interview data to present empirically grounded descriptions of the financing, socialisation processes (schooling and sex roles), labour market articulation and school decision making processes in the modern Irish education system.[94] This corpus of work has, for the most part avoided direct consideration of the politics of education, except in the case of Hannon & Boyle (1987). In this study on 'schooling decisions', a conceptual framework is utilised in which organisational theory (Perrow, 1967, 1972) is linked to a 'strategic choice' theory (Child, 1972) which recognises "*the essentially political process in which constraints and opportunities are functions of power exercised by decision-makers in the light of ideological values.*"[95] This study, in presenting a broad range of school level data and a rigorous analytical framework which gives a centrality to the "political process", is a rarity in Irish educational studies.[96]

The treatment of the Vocational Education Committee system in Irish educational studies has been relatively slight. Many of the publications listed above [Atkenson (1975), Titley (1983), Coolahan (1981), Mulcahy (1981), O'Buachalla (1988), Lynch (1989), Drudy & Lynch (1993) and Hannon & Boyle (1987)] include study of the activities of the vocational education system, and in the process make analytical and evaluative observations. Some, [e.g. O'Sullivan (1988), Lynch (1989) and Hannon & Boyle, (1987)], utilise their analysis to contribute to current international debate on theoretical aspects of education policy studies - almost exclusively from the perspective of political sociology. Farren(1996) explicitly excludes consideration of the technical and vocational sector in his recent study.[97] The vocational education system

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- 1988(b) Reproduction in Education: an elaboration of current neo-marxist models of analysis', British Journal of the Sociology of Education, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp 151-168.
- (1989) The Hidden Curriculum:Reproduction in Education, An Appraisal, London, Falmer Press.
Drudy, S. & Lynch, K. (1993) Schools and Society in Ireland, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan.

94 This work includes:Tussing, A.D. (1978) Irish Educational Expenditures - Past, Present and Future, Paper No. 92, Dublin. The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).
Hannon, D. & Breen, R. et al (1983) Schooling and Sex Roles:Sex Differences in Subject Provision and Student Choice in Irish Post-Primary Schools, Paper No 114, Dublin, ESRI
Hannon, D. & Boyle, M. (1987) Schooling Decisions:The Origins and Consequences of Selection and Streaming in Irish Post-Primary Schools, Paper No. 136, Dublin
ESRI; Hannon, D. & Shortall, S. (1991) The Quality of their Schooling:School Leavers' Views of Educational Objectives and Outcomes, Paper No. 153, Dublin
ESRI and Hannon, D. & O'Riain, S. (1993) Pathways to Adulthood in Ireland:Causes and Consequences of Success and Failure in Transitions amongst Irish Youth, Paper No. 161, Dublin, ESRI.

95 See Hannon & Boyle (1987) opcit p6-24; Child, J. (1972) 'Organisational Structure, Environment and Performance, The Role of Strategic Choice' in Sociology, Vol. 6, pp 1-22; Perrow, C. (1967) "A Framework for Comparative Organisational Analysis', American Sociological Review, Vol. 32 pp 194-208,
Perrow, C. (1972) Complex Organisations:A Critical Essay, Glenview:Scott Foresman.

96 I see fruitful potential in linking the analyses of Hannon & Boyle (1987) and Hargreaves (1983) work on "administrative convenience", referred to above.

97 Farren (1996) treats of the parallel politics of education north and south and like O'Buachalla makes extensive use of archive material.

while receiving considerable public attention has not received much by way of focused academic attention. A search of theses presented at Irish Universities 1911 to 1994 reveals 176 theses whose subject matter touches the vocational education system or matters directly pertinent to this study. Twenty two (22) are at doctorate level, the remainder presented for M.A., M.Ed. or M. Litt. degrees.[98] The Vocational Education system is examined in two masters theses, Dolan (1980) and Hennessy (1987).[99] In addition, the county vocational education committees in three counties have been the subject of individual (masters' level) studies. More general studies of education in counties Clare, Kilkenny and Cavan treat of the vocational education system in the wider context of post-primary provision.[100]

Other published work relating to the vocational education committee system is sparse. Durcan (1972)[101] provides a loose chronicle, organised around the provision of 'manual instruction' in the Irish school system. O'Laoghaire, (1991),[102] written as a response to O'Buachalla (1988), is a celebratory set of reflections by a retired Secretary to the Department of Education. Brown and Fairley (1993)[103] presents a contemporary audit of the vocational education committee system in the context of current debates on the restructuring of educational governance. A collection of essays relating to the development of the teachers' representative organisations in the vocational education system is due for publication. Under the editorship of Logan, historian of nineteenth century education in Ireland, this publication presents papers based on archival researches on such topics as: - Technical Education before 1930 (Byrne):The Origins of Trade Unionism in Vocational Education, 1899-1930, (O'Connor), 'The State and Vocational Education 1930-1960', Girvin, 'The Role of the Committee 1930-1960', (Jones),'The Curriculum of Vocational Education 1930-1960' (Hyland) and 'The Various Representative Bodies for Teachers, 1930-1990' (Logan). This work provides a sustained analysis and interpretative study of many aspects of the vocational system.[104]

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98 See ESAI, Register of Theses on Educational Topics in Universities in Ireland, Vol. 1, 1911-1979, Vol. 2. 1980-1990, and Supplements for 1991-1994 and also:Sugrue, C. & Ui Thuama, C. (1994) Perspectives on Substance and Method in Post-Graduate Educational Research in Ireland', Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 13, pp 102-129 and Fontes, P (1983) 'Theses on Educational Topics in Universities in Ireland:Their Distribution by University, Topic and Degree'. Irish Journal of Education, xvii, No. 2, pp 80-104.

99 Dolan, P (1980) The Origins of the system of Vocational Education in Ireland and changing conceptions of the system from 1930-1978. M. Ed. Thesis, N.U.I. University College, Dublin; Hennessy, M. (1987) 'A reassessment of vocational education in Ireland, 1930-1987), including a case study of vocational schooling in a rural area'. M. Ed. Thesis, N.U.I., University College, Cork.

100 Kennedy, B. (1981) 'The Origin and development of vocational education in Co. Meath - a Case Study'. M. Ed. Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin; McEoin, S. (1981) 'Forbairt an Ghairoideachais i gContae na Gaillimh: (The Development of Vocational Education in Co. Galway). M. Ed. Thesis, N.U.I. University College, Galway, Owans, T. (1984) Developments in the Day Vocational Education Sector in Co. Cork, with particular reference to the period since 1960' M. Ed. N.U.I., UCC.

101 Durcan, T.J. (1972) History of Irish Education from 1800:with special reference to Manual Instruction, Bala, Wales, Dragon Books.

102 O'Laoghaire, D. (1991) 'The Missionary Impulse:A Tribute to Vocational Education, Dublin, National Council for Education Awards.

103 Brown, A & Fairley, J. (1993) 'Restructuring Education in Ireland - a Report, Tralee, Association of CEOs of VECs/Southwest VECs.

104 I am grateful to Dr. John Logan, Dept. of Government and Society, University of Limerick for access to typescript versions of the papers to be published in 1998.

The Irish studies referred to above are cited extensively throughout this work and are used as secondary sources in many instances. Evaluative comment further to that above in presented in the context of such citations and related analysis.

Summary

This Chapter has reviewed literature on education and politics with a view to providing a conceptual framework with which to organise and analyse the data assembled on the establishment and development of the VEC system in Ireland. A range of academic disciplines around education have been drawn on in an eclectic assembly of interpretative frames from history, sociology, politics, and curriculum studies in the version of educational policy studies presented here. It is suggested that a complimentary use of these disciplines will afford a more comprehensive frame work for the study of the VEC system. Thus Archer(1971,19737,1979), with Ringer,(1979) and Muller(1988), along with Hopper(1968) provide a set of consructs for describing system politics and development: e.g. - *Mono-Integration, Centralisation, Decentralisation, Segmentation, Assertion, Dominance, Selection & Allocation.* From Kogan,(1975), Guthrie & Koppich,(1978), Marshallet al (1989) and others are drawn constructs represented by the terms *Culture, Ideology, Values, Agency* and *Policy Entrepreneurs.* From Dale,(1994) and from McPherson & Raab,(1988) are derived the constructs of *Policy Communities* and the distinction between *The Politics of Education* and *Educational Politics.* In this Chapter also an overview is presented of related education policy research in Ireland and the use of explanatory models utilised in this work has been noted.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY

Educational systems stand in complex relation to modern economies. They manifest remarkable shifts in adaptation to changing circumstances. But they have yet to fulfil the dreams of children of the enlightenment. And they still defy adequate analysis by social scientists.

A.H. Halsey (1990)[1]

Yet, under the skin, most of us are still children of the Enlightenment:we still believe that learning, knowing, understanding, thinking "civilise"; that education, the cultivation of human minds and spirits, is the foundation of a good and economically productive society:that the improvement of education is a means to a better society.

Ronald Dore, (1976)[2]

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to examine the existing literature on the relationship between education and economy in twentieth century societies and to sketch out a conceptual framework which will be used to examine this relationship in the case of the vocational education system in Ireland 1930-1990.

Theoretical positions on economic matters are rooted in either explicit or tacit philosophical positions about such fundamental matters as - "*the nature of the human existence*", "*the good life*", "*society*", the "*state*" and the relationships between these. It is to be anticipated that fundamental differences in economic theory will reflect themselves in equally fundamental differences on the matter of the role of education in society, and education's relation to the economy. It is proposed then to identify a range of key concepts utilised in economics of education discourse, and the insight they provide for us.

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1 From Halsey, A.H. (1990) 'Education System and the Economy' in Martinelli & Smelsner (ed.) 'Economy and Society', London: Sage.

2 Dore, R. (1976) The Diploma Disease:Education Qualification and Development, London: , George Allen & Unwin.

Following Hamilton (1990), I propose to look at education and the economy from two distinct perspectives:

(i) education in the economic system and

(ii) economic concepts in the analysis of education[3]

In the first instance, we look at education and its place in the economy of a state. Most obviously, education systems are a cost. The way in which the costs are met, the extent to which money is spent on education and the distribution of that expenditure across various levels, are all matters of concern to economists of education. Secondly, it is generally thought that education can contribute to the productivity of an economy. Thirdly, using the language of economists, education can be looked at as a 'commodity' for which there is a market and 'consumers' prepared to 'purchase', for their own ends[4]. These three (economic) ways of looking at education, (as cost factor, as production factor and as 'market/consumer factor') fall within the general framework which examines the education system in or as part of, the economic system. In this perspective the point of focus is the economy, and the question is "How does education influence the economy?"

The alternative perspective asks, 'How does the economy influence education?" and is characterised by the application of economic concepts to the analysis of schooling. Thus Lortie (1973) offers "*Observations on Teaching as Work.*"[5] Chubb and Moe (1987 & 1990) in '*No school is an island:politics, markets and education*'[6] recommend that "*effective control over schools would be transferred from government to the market.*"[7] Analyses which utilise economic models and concepts have been influential in most countries since the 1960's. Recent examples include Birch and Smart (1989) which addresses "*economic rationalism*" and the politics of education in Australia, and Cookson (1992) studies "*consumership and the coming deregulation of the public school system*" in the U.S.[8]

The use of both these perspectives, i.e. (education in the economic system, and economic concepts in the analysis of education) suggest an assumption of reciprocity in the relationship between education and the economy. The conduct of education influences the economy; particular modes of economic analysis

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3 Hamilton, D. (1990) Learning about Education:An Unfinished Curriculum, Milton Keynes:Open University Press, p65.

4 A recent succinct statement of this position is to be found in Skilbeck, M. (1994) 'International Co-operation in Education:An OECD Perspective', in OECD Documents Series 1994, "Issues in Education in Asia and the Pacific:An International Perspective, Paris, OECD "Knowledge, which is the staple of education, is an international commodity whose vitality and growth depend on the free exchange of information and ideas."

5 Lortie, (1973) in Travers, RMW (ed) 'Second Handbook of Research on Teaching, Chicago:Rand McNally.

6 Chubb and Moe (1987) "No School is an Island:Politics, Markets and Education") Journal of Education Policy (hereafter JEP) 5: 2, p131-141, p140-141.
Also same authors (1990) Politics, Markets and America's Schools, Washington: Brookings Institute.

7 Fairley and Paterson (1994) "Scottish Education and the New Managerialism" unpublished conference paper (draft) also examines this phenomenon of the application of economic frameworks to education systems.

8 Birch. I., and Smart, D., (1989) "Economic rationalism and the politics of education in Australia" in Politics of Education Association Yearbook, 1989, Special Issue of Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 4, No. 5. p137-152 and Cookson, PW., (1992) 'The Ideology of Consumership and the coming deregulation of the public school system' in Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 7, No. 3, p301-312.

applied to education, influence the conduct of education. It is proposed to progress our analysis of this reciprocal relationship by examining briefly 'economy' and 'economics' as a field of study.

Economics and the Economy

Many authors when offering a definition of 'economics' refer to Robbins (1932). *'An Essay on the Nature and the Significance of Economics'* and his definition of economics as one of the social sciences which *'investigates problems that arise when scarce resources are used to satisfy unlimited, changing and often conflicting human wants'*.[9] This approach to the definition focuses on the study of the activity of making economic decisions and the field of economics is seen as a form of 'practical knowledge', knowledge that relates to the conduct of economic affairs. In addition, to speak of 'the economy', suggests an 'out-there' reality which is the subject of observation and description with its rules and 'scientific laws' unveiled by systematic, scientific study. The reference to an 'economic system' has a deep-seated affinity to mechanistic view of the Universe in which the 'system' *can be examined to expose its operations and relationships'*.[10] From the emergence of economics as an area of study, (with Adam Smith [1723-1790] and the publication of *'An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations'*,[11]) there has been an underlying assumption about an "out-there" system of relationships, a "providential design", with its own dynamic and rules or laws, which can be uncovered by inductive and deductive reasoning. The view taken by Parsons (1956: 40) can be seen as intimating the complexity and dynamic or adaptive nature of the economic system, while continuing the underlying notion of an out-there design, the object of systematic study.[12] Taylor (1989) sees the emergence of the economic sphere as an object of study as an element of the "*broad movement of the culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*" and links with it, the rise of the novel, the changing understanding of marriage and the family and a "*new importance attached to sentiment*", all of which reflect a higher valuation being put on the ordinary dimensions of human existence, "*the affirmation of ordinary life.*"[13] Those aspects of human life concerned with production and

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9 Kneller, G.F. (1968) Education and Economic Thought, New York, John Wiley & Son. p3. See also Westoby (1974) 'Economics and Education' in Politics, Philosophy & Economics in Education, Milton Keynes:The Open University, p123; Nevin, E. (1976) Textbook of Economic Analysis Fourth Edition, London:MacMillan p5; Robbins, L. (1932) An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science, London:MacMillan, p15.

10 See Hamilton (1989) p 77.

11 Smith, A. 'An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations', Cannon, E. (eds.) London: Methuen (1904).

12 Parsons & Smelser (1956) Economy & Society, London:RKP p40: - "..the economy can be regarded first as meeting the adaptive exigencies as a whole by the production of utility, and second as having goal attainment, adaptive, integrative and pattern maintenance exigencies of its own." Cited in Hamilton P(1983). Talcott Parsons: London: Tavistock, p112.

13 Taylor, C. (1989) Sources of the Self:The Making of Modern Identity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See p285-6. Taylor's major work posits three interlinked characteristics of "modern human identity" - (i) a heightened sense of "inwardness" of the self, as the source of sensibility and moral judgement, (ii) a view of nature "as an inner moral source, ("from this perspective, a central part of the good life must consist in being open to the impulse of nature, being attuned to it, and not cut off from it." p372) and (iii) the affirmation of ordinary life. The new valuation of ordinary life in general and commercial life in particular, can be traced, according to Taylor (p285/6) "in the recession of the aristocratic honour ethic", being replaced by a "bourgeois" outlook which stressed "the goods of production, an-ordered life, and peace - in short the activities of ordinary life." Economics which "focuses on the interchange between humans and nature as a domain with its own laws,...cannot be seen just as a 'scientific' discovery that people stumbled on. It reflects the higher value put on this dimension of human existence, the affirmation of ordinary life" p286. The new science (of economics), in its notion that the "events in this domain form a self-regulating system....of production and exchange is a prime manifestation of the interlocking providential order of nature." p286. The laws of economics are a subset of the laws of nature and the 'good life' is pursued by living in accordance with them. This idea

reproduction, work, the making of things needed for life, life as sexual beings, including marriage and the family, these become in the eighteenth century integral to the view of the "good life" the full human life. They contest the place of classical (Aristotelian & Platonic) ideals such as the contemplative life, the life of the citizen or the medieval ideals of the warrior. A more egalitarian and '*mundane*' set of ideals is put in their place.[14] Popper (1963: 332) sees this contest and 'affirmation of the ordinary' in the social and economic theorising of Marx and Engels.

> *I think it is a fair interpretation of Marx and Engels to say that one of their chief interests in emphasising materialism was to dismiss any theory which, referring to the rational and spiritual nature of man, maintains that society has to be based on an idealist and spiritualist basis....In opposition, they stressed the material side of human nature - such as our need for food and other material goods - and its importance..."*[15]

Adam Smith's "economic man", motivated by enlightened self interest in his rational calculation of utility, took his place as an idealised type, in opposition to the Platonic Philosopher King, or the chivalrous Knight of Medieval Christianity.[16] For Weber, the critical process was "the rise in rationalism in western society." This linked Protestant theology and ethics with the rise of experimental science, rational law and rational government administration.[17] It was not very surprising then that the ideals, the rationality and the "affirmation of the ordinary" would reflect themselves in the social institutions of education.

Hamilton (1989) presents an illuminating study of the manner in which "new pedagogic practices embrace new visions of society, new images of teaching and learning, and....new conceptions of educational management." "*Cultural and material realignments*" give rise to pedagogic changes which "come into being, persist, and then fade away."[18] Sufficient for our purposes here, to note the nexus he posits between the writings of Adam Smith and the establishment of the classroom system of the nineteenth century which he characterises as "*the ultimate victory of group-based pedagagies over more individualized forms of teaching and learning that had been dominant in earlier times.*"[19] This development was co-terminal with the establishment in Europe of systems of elementary education for the general populations.[20]

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of economics as a part of nature and nature as a 'moral source" helps explain the engagement and moral commitment that is not infrequently associated with economic discourse.

14 See Taylor opcit. p211 f.f.

15 See Popper, K. (1963) Conjectures and Refutations, The Growth of Scientific Knowledge, London: RKP, p322.

16 See Kneller (1968) Education and Economic Thought:New York:John Wiley & Sons, p27. Yeats poem 'September 1913' can be read as an eloquent assertion of the ancient ideal against the new man prevalent in Ireland at that time. Schumpeter charachertised the individual entrepreneur as a "sort of Knight willing to joust with all the odds to make his ideas work" cited in Kneller, opcit. p58.

17 See Martinelli, A., & Smelser, N.J. (1990) 'Economic Sociology:Historical Trends and Analytical Issues" in Martinelli & Smelser, (eds.) Economy and Society, London: Sage p12.

18 See Hamilton, D. (1989) Towards a Theory of Schooling,London, Falmer Press.
For accounts of educational change which focus more on political realignment see Archer and DeSwan (1990) In Care of the State, - Cambridge:Policy Press. Ch. 3.

19 Chapter 4 of Hamilton (1989) is titled 'Adam Smith and the Moral Economy of the Classroom System', see p75-96 It may be argued that the individualism of Adam Smith is equally alighned to the progressive, child-centres educational tradition from Rouseau to Mostessori. The 1960's rediscovered the progressive tradition while realising more explicitly the economic role of education. [For an interesting discussion of the concept of 'moral economy' see Burke (1992) 'History and Social Theory': Cambridge: Pilot Press, p71 f.f.]

20 See Flora, P (1983) State Economy and Society in Europe 1815-1875, p555-629: see also p.188.

The expansion of education for the general populace was argued for by early economists: by Smith, on the basis that it would "*reduce crime, overcome delusion, inhibit superstition and in general, enhance the social order*";[21] by Malthus (1766-1834) because "*it will make them happier and therefore less inclined to revolution*"[22] by J.S. Mill (1806-1873) because "*it would diffuse good sense among the people, with such knowledge as would qualify them to judge of the tendencies of their actions.*"[23]

The arrival and development of economics as a subject of study is usefully seen as broadly co-terminal with the establishment of the modern institution of schooling. Their growth, development and mutual relationships stem from broad socio-cultural realignments which characterise the modern period of history. However, it was the second half of the twentieth century before the schooling systems themselves became the object of systematic study by economists.

The Economics of Education

The birth of the economics of education is said to have occurred in the early 1960's. Johnes (1993)[24] goes so far as to identify a precise date associated with Schultz's paper on "*investment in human capital.*"[25] The same author writing in the inaugural edition of the journal '*Education Economics*' (1993), refers to *'an explosion of interest in the economics of education'* in recent years.[26] From being a "*minor topic within labour economics,*" the widespread international restructuring and reform of education systems have given the economic analysis of education a new significance.[27]

The quotation from Halsey cited at the top of this Chapter draws attention to the complexity of the relationship between economics and education, a point confirmed by Psacharapolous & Woodhall (1984).[28] However, two general points of focus, or claims for pertinence, are made for the economics of education; firstly, because economists ask questions about the choices made in an educational world of scarce means and many wants, economic analysis is used to illuminate how and why resource allocation decisions are made in education, thus guiding policy makers and administrators:secondly, by distinguishing inputs from process and outputs, economic analysis focuses study on the returns on education, and the evaluation of education outcomes.[29] The complexity arises not just from the complexities of the education process and its

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21 Kneller opcit. p26
22 ibid. p29
23 ibid. p30.
24 Johnes, G. (1993) The Economics of Education, London: MacMillan.
25 On 28 December, 1960, Theodore Schultz delivered a lecture to the American Economic Association, subsequently published as 'Investment in Human Capital in Americal Economic Review, 51: 1-17).
26 See 'Education Economics' Vol. 1. No. 1. p3. "Editorial."
27 Johnes (1993) p3.
28 Psacharopolous, G. and Woodhall, M. (1985) 'Education for Development:An Analysis of Investment Choices, Oxford: Oxford University Press for World Bank, p168.
29 See Thomas & Simpkins (1987) "The Potential Contribution of Economics" in Thomas & Simpkins Economics and the Management of Education Energent Thomas:Lewes:Falmer Press: p11-13.

institutional language,[30] but also from the differences in theoretical paradigms which are applied to the subject, each with its own conceptual framework in which the data is cast and interrogated.

Halsey (1990) suggests that there are three types of political economy with three related types of educational organisations. [31] These relate to the major economic theories. However, they are seen to be variants on the views of the "two competing giants of liberalism and Marxism." According to Halsey,

> *Research on the relation between education and economy over the past two decades has largely, if often tacitly, been conducted as application of these two contending traditions of social and political thought...*[32]

Liberalism

In the liberal framework, based largely on classical economics, education exists because it provides utility. Education may be described as an 'investment good' when acquired knowledge and skill is seen as contributing to future earnings or returns to either individual or state; as a 'production good' where it is a source of skills and knowledge which increases productivity and output' and a 'consumer good' when it is a source of immediate, self-contained satisfaction. Finally, education can be regarded as a 'positional good' ,in so far as it locates individuals in relative, social and labour market status positions, which are sought for their prestige and financial concomitants.[33] In the liberal (neo-classical) approach, the costs and the returns on education can be measured even though it is recognised that costs are 'borne over a long time' and benefits are 'especially durable'.[34] In a crude formulation, the neo-classical approach is presented as follows: -

> *The discounted stream of future costs and benefits must be considered, just as a business man must consider net present values when making an investment in a new piece of capital. This insight, due to Gary Becker (1964) led to the development of the theory of human capital. An investment in education is tantamount to an investment in a machine which can be fitted on to the human body and which improves ones performance in the workplace:the future returns to such a machine - or to the educated individual - are expected to exceed the outlay of time and money involved in its purchase.*[35]

For liberals, education "*is central to the determination of both production and distribution.*"[36] A progressive upgrading of knowledge and skills is demanded for increased production and economic growth. The structure of employment changes with advances in technology, from unskilled manual labour to diverse non-manual, technical, professional and managerial employment which require '*ever more*

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30 See Psacharapolous & Woodhall (1985) p168.
31 Halsey (1990) opcit. p82-93.
32 ibid. p93-94.
33 See Johnes opcit. p5. and Halsey (1990) p60.
34 Johnes, p6.
35 Johnes (1993) opcit p6.
36 Halsey (1990) p 94.

elaborate education and training'.[37] The modernisation of economies is marked by shifts in employment from '*primary* to *secondary* to *tertiary* sectors of production, that is from agriculture to manufacturing to services, reinforcing demand for skilled labour, professionals and managers.[38] Upward mobility through a meritocratic education system and change from ascription to achievement as the mechanism for labour market placement, and intergenerational social movement through education both became possible, as the structure of employment changes in modernised economies, enlarging opportunities in the professional managerial and technical occupations. Halsey suggests that the research evidence *"shows a great deal of movement"* to confirm the liberal, neo-classical analysis. He goes on to draw a distinction between "structural mobility" and 'exchange mobility' which he asserts, "denotes the degree of openness of a society."[39] The emergence of widespread unemployment in industrialised countries since the mid 1970's however, and the identification of an 'underclass' from those previously employed in manual work, from ethnic minorities and from the educationally unsuccessful, raises questions about the "*liberal dream of a classless society of skilled workers.*"[40] Halsey concludes with the view that "*The evidence is disputed but certainly cannot be held to uphold the optimistic theories advanced by liberals.*"[41] This position concurs with that reported by Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992)[42]. This topic has been the subject of considerable scrutiny in Ireland for the period 1970 to 1990[43] and will be examined more completely in the Chapter on social contexts for vocational education 1930-1990.

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37 ibid. p95.

38 ibid.

39 ibid. p96. The point here is that change in the class structure due to modernisation is not to be equated with greater fluidity in both directions between socio-economic classes.

40 ibid. p97.

41 ibid. p96.

42 Erikson, R., and Godlthorpe, J.H. (1992):The Constant Flux:A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies, Oxford: Clarendon Press, as cited in Whelan, Breen & Whelan (1992) "Industrialisation, Class Formation and Social Mobility in Ireland", p106.

43 See Hout, M. (1989) Following in Fathers Footsteps: Social Mobility in Ireland:Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University also Whelan & Whelan (1984) Social Mobility in the Republic of Ireland:A Comparative Perspective: Dublin:ESRI.

Marxism

Analysis of 'education and economy' in the Marxist tradition has been characterised as the "correspondence approach" which builds on the core Marxist tenets around 'the relations of production', the 'double significance of human labour as a good and as a source of economic value' and the concepts of 'base superstructure and reproduction'.[44] The Marxist tradition presents an analysis of education change as 'corresponding' or responding to economic change. "*Pedagogy, curriculum and institutional structure are but a homologue to the capitalist system of production.*"[45] A central text in this perspective is Bowles and Gintis (1976) Schooling in Capitalist America. Having examined nineteenth and twentieth century transitions in education in the U.S., the following basic insight is presented:

> *The three turning points in U.S. educational history which we have identified, all correspond to particularly intense periods of struggle around the expansion of capitalist production relations.*"[46] In this framework, *'education and educational policies are viewed as the lever by which dominant groups are able to produce and reproduce, both the forces (manpower, skills, scientific knowledge etc.), and social relations (hierarchy and division of labour) of production.*[47]

In this view

> *every kind of practice or institutional arrangement found in schools is to be understood as the unmediated reflection of the economic process or the social relations of production...school appears as a place in which there is 'a near perfect fit' between its practices, and policies, and the interests and ideology of those groups or classes that are dominant in society. In its crudest sense, schooling has been seen as a process that mirrors the organisation of the factory; in the broader view school is regarded as a 'transmission belt' for the dissemination of capitalist ideology.*[48]

Roger Dale, in a paper first written in 1979,[49] identified three key linkages between education and economy in capitalist society: -

(i) directly supporting capital accumulation (by labour enhancement),

(ii) contributing to a context not inimical to its continuing development, (by implementing adjustments, such as are found in the welfare state), and

(iii) providing legitimation for its activities', (by the rhetoric and structures that promote equality and mobility).[50]

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44 Artinelli & Smelsner,(1990).

45 Sha Shapiro, H., (1983) Habermas, O'Connor and Wolfe and the Crisis of the Welfare Capitalist State: Conservative Politics and the Roles of Educational Policy in the 1980's in Educational Theory, Vol. 33, No. 3 & 4 p135-147, p135.

46 Bowles & Gintis (1976) Schooling in Capitalist America, New York:Basic Books, p234.

47 Sha Shapiro (1983) opcit. p135.

48 ibid.

49 See Dale, R. (1989) 'Education and the Capitalist State, 'Contributions and Contradictions' in The State and Education Policy, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, p23-44, esp p28. See also Preface, px.

50 This perspective dominates Kathleen Lynch's analysis of the Irish education system in Lynch, K. (1989) The Hidden Curriculum:Reproduction in Education: , an Appraisal. Lewes, Falmer Press.

With a focus on the second and third link in Dale's trilogy, and on the social relations of capitalist society, Pierre Bourdieu places the emphasis on the social and cultural reproduction processes in which education plays such a role. In doing so he develops the concept of 'cultural capital' which like physical capital offers its owners an advantageous or dominant role in social relations, as well as the means for its own reproduction and aggrandizement.[51] Because schools require 'cultural capital' for success, but critically, "*do not provide it*" (Lynch 1989: 21) pupils without 'cultural capital' are predestined to fail within the school system because of their initial deficits. Bernstein, by reference to language codes,[52] and Paul Willis by reference to '*working class culture*'[53] offer related explanations for the perpetuation of social class divisions, or 'social reproduction', effected through the school system despite its rhetoric of egalitarianism. In recent years, Marxist analysis has moved from the strongly determinist mode of correspondence theory to a more modulated statement of the role of the education system which is captured by the phrase "*relative autonomy.*"[54]

This point is reflected in the following from Michael W. Apple:

> *From theories of correspondence - where schooling is seen to reproduce the division of labour through the teaching of a hidden curriculum, and where the overt curriculum is seen as only reproducing the cultural capital of the dominant classes - we have moved to more subtle approaches that are less determined and less reductive.*
>
> *Further, from an earlier position in which everything of importance in schooling was seen to stem from the workings of the capitalist economy, the joint construction and mutual interdependence of (and contradictory relations among) the economic, political and cultural/ideological 'spheres' of society have now been increasingly recognised as well..*[55]

This brief overview of the position of the 'competing giants' makes it possible to locate, in their natural 'habitat', the range of concepts used to examine the detail of the relationship between education and economy. As outlined in Chapter 1, the position adopted in this study posits that an education system may be more or less open to the influence of social institutions such as the economy. The suscetpibility of the education system to modify itself to the economy is moderated by its opennes to other institutions, such as churches and religious organisation, for example. In addition, education systems moderate their own

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51 See Bourdieu, P (1973) 'Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction' in Brown, R., (eds.) 'Knowledge and Cultural Change, London:Tavistock. p73, cited in Lynch (1989). In Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) 'An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology:Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p118-120 Bourdieuelaborates on his concept of 'capital': "..capital presents itself under three fundamental species (each with its own sub-types), namely, economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. Cultural capital, which we should in fact call informational capital.. exists in three forms, embodied, objectified, or institutionalized. Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or grouping by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. Acknowledging that capital can take a variety of forms is indispensable to explain the structure and dynamics of differentiated societies.

52 Bernstein, B. (1975) Class Codes and Control (esp Vol.3) London:Rouledge & Kogan Paul.

53 Willis, P (1977) Learning to Labour, Hampshire: Gower.

54 See Svi Shapiro (1983), opcit. Apple, M., (1982) Education and Power, London:RKP (Ark Paperpacks edition 1985)

55 Apple, M.W. (1989) 'Ideology and the State in Education Policy- - a critical introduction to Dale, R. The State and Education Policy:Buckingham:Open University Press.

responses to the economy by being significantly self-directed and having, under certain circumstances, a form of relative autonomy.

Education and Manpower Policy

The remaining sections of the Chapter will deal with 'Education and Manpower Policy', 'Financing Education', and 'Education and Consumption'. These major headings will be used to examine a range of ideas encountered in the literature and are based on a modification of the framework presented in Kostecki (1985).[56] The sections are of uneven length with the most extended section relating to 'education and manpower policy'.

Under the broad heading of manpower policy, three main sets of economic objectives are included as roles for the education system:

(i) the formation of productive skills
(ii) the "sorting" of human resources and
(iii) the regulation of unemployment.

The Formation of Productive Skills

Labour and enterprise are indentified in neo-classical economic theory as 'factors of production'.[57] Both are attributes of people and are capable of existing to greater or lesser degrees of economic utility. We have seen above also how Johnes attributes the establishment of the study of the 'economics of education' to the development by Schultz of the concept of 'human capital'. From the point of view of the factors of production, education can be seen as *'human capital formation'*.[58] Johnes goes on to make a distinction between 'general human capital' - defined as *'skill and knowledge which enhances a worker's productivity, regardless of where she is employed'*,[59] and 'specific human capital', which can productively be used "only by the workers' current employer." This distinction suggests the question (to be examined in the next section) as to who should pay the cost of this capital formation - should it be the worker, the employer, or the state acting on behalf of both? The other side of the question about who should pay (i.e. make the "investment in education") is the matter of returns on the investment. In the 1960's, Schultz (1961) and Denison (1962) argued that education contributes directly to the growth of national income by improving the skills and productive capacities of the labour force. Further studies by Hicks (1980) and Wheeler

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56 Kostecki, M. (1985) 'The Economic Functions of Schooling', in Compare, Vol. 15, No. 1. p16.

57 See Kneller (1968), Education and Economic Thought, New York: Wiley & Sons, p27 and Schrumpeter, J.A. (1954) A History of Economic Analysis, p590.

58 See Johnes (1993) p14, Schultz (1993). 'The Economic Importance of Human Capital in Modernisation' in Education Economics Vol. 1, No. 1. 1993 p13-20.

(1980), using slightly different methodologies, confirmed educational contributions to national income growth.(GDP) [60]. Psacharapolous & Woodhall (1985: 17) report percentage contributions from education to annual growth rates in twenty nine countries, ranging from a high of 25% in Canada to 0.8% in Mexico (12% in U.K.) and Wheeler (1980) found that on the average an increase in the literacy rate from 20 to 30 percent causes national income (GDP) to rise by 8 to 16 percent[61]. Psacharapolous and Woodhall conclude their review of the evidence by asserting:

> *There is ample evidence that education makes both a direct and indirect contribution to economic growth...the most likely causal link is from education to economic growth rather than the other way around...*[62]

If governments wish to maximise growth, however, they need to know how educational investment compares with other forms of investment - particularly investment in physical capital and social infrastructure - and which forms of educational investment offer the highest returns. In other words, educational investment must be evaluated in terms of opportunity costs and the relationship between costs and expected benefits.[63] As suggested above, however, it should be noted that the "social return" to education investment is not necessarily the same as, or equal to, the 'private return' on educational investment. Both Psacharopolous & Woodhall (1985: 27-45) and Johnes (1993: 29-71) present data on the return to individuals throughout their working lives, from investment in their education. The following generalisations represent the findings of contemporary international studies.

- Earnings are highly correlated with education, at every age; the highly educated earn more than workers with less education.
- Earnings rise with age to a single peak and then flatten or fall until retirement age. The profiles, however are steeper for higher educated individuals than for those with less education.
- The higher the level of education, the later the age at which earnings reach their peak.[64]
- Social rates of return are consistently lower than private rates of return.
- Social and private rates of return to primary education tend to be higher than to secondary or higher education.
- The private returns are in excess of social returns, especially at the university level.

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59 ibid.

60 Cited by Psacharopolous & Woodhall (1985) p20.

61 ibid. This work p14-22 examines the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies utilised in studies of the contribution of education to economic growth, with particular reference to the import of the assumption that "earnings of different groups of workers are a measure of their contribution to output." (p19) See also reference to Krais (1979) below, p19. Johnes, opcit. p23-26. cites a number of more recent studies, e.g. Wilson (1987), Blanchflower and Oswald (1989) and Murphy and Welch (1989) supporting the view that "returns to education have markedly increased over recent decades." p25.

62 ibid. p20-21.

63 ibid. p19-20.

64 The above drawn from Psacharapolous & Woodhall opcit. p40.

- The rate of return on education investment is higher in developing countries than in developed countries.
- The rate of return to investment in education is higher than the average rate of return to physical capital in developing countries, though not necessarily in developed countries.[65]

The productive skills that generate these returns on investment have been differentiated by Kostecki (op.cit p.6,16) into technical skills, social productive skills, (i.e. "*skills to get things done with people and through people...co-operative attitudes, communication, self-reliance,...appreciation of the dignity of honest work, leadership*")[66] and finally, research and development (R&D) skills. The existence of these skills, he suggests, will encourage companies to locate their productive activities in those areas where skilled labour is easily available, and will also improve the 'prospect of self-employment and entrepreneurship' (ibid). Much recent literature focuses on the role of the education system in promoting entrepreneurship or the 'enterprise culture', a set of skills and attitudes, deemed central to economic production.[67]

In summary then, we have identified a distinction between general and specific skills, in terms of their utility across employments; we have distinguished between social, technical and research and development skills as differing types of productive skills, and have linked the presence of all such productive skills with both social and private financial returns on the investment.[68]

Manpower Planning

Given this view of the role of skills in economic growth, it is little wonder that economists moved to identify the particular sets of productive skills required for economic growth and development and make arrangements to establish education and training systems to meet these identified need. Labour market forecasting and manpower planning became a major subject of study for policy makers and for academics.[69] Parnes (1962) put forward the view that "*it is possible to ascertain the optimum amount of education for achieving specified growth targets.*"[70]

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65 ibid. p54-55.

66 Kostecki (1985) p6.

67 Including Department of Education (Ireland) (1992) Education for a Changing World, Dublin:Government Publications. As we have seen above, enterprise may be identified as a quality of labour, or as a separate 'factor of production', along with labour, capital, national resources and technology. There are considerable implications for the social relations of production in regarding 'enterprise' as resident in all members of the labour force, as opposed to being an attribute of captial.

68 Kostecki (opcit) p16. The rationale presented in the preceeding paragraph is basic rationale utilised for the introduction and development of vocational education systems. See Department of Education (Ireland) Report of the Commission on Technical Education (1927), Coffey, D. (1992) School and Work Developments in Vocational Education, London:Cassell and Sultana, R.G. (1992) Education and National Development:Historical and Critical Perspectives on Vocational Schooling in Malta. Msida, Malta:Mireva Press.

69 A UNESCO survey in 1968, sixty countries out of seventy-three surveyed had drawn up educational plans and attempted to base these plans on forecasts of future manpower requirements - See Psacharapoulous & Woodhall (1985) p72.
Ireland's 'Investment in Education Report', 1965 was part of this wave. The Report which was OECD funded was directly modelled on the "Mediterranean Regional Project (MRP) which attempted to forecast the manpower requirements of six Mediterranean countries - Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Yugosalvia. This project was one of the earliest attempts to use manpower forecasting as a basis for educational planning. See Psacharapoulous & Woodhall p83, Department of Education, Ireland, (1965) 'Investment in Education' p ii &

Psacharapolous & Woodhall (1985: 74) contend that the core idea of manpower planning, i.e. that a certain level of skilled manpower is necessary to achieve a particular level of output or economic target, rests, on two other basic assumptions -

(i) a fixed relationship between the input of skilled manpower in different occupational categories in an industry, sector, or the economy as a whole and its level of output.

(ii) a fixed relationship between the educational qualifications of workers and their productivity.

The strength (validity) of these assumptions has been challenged by critics of manpower planning[71] who suggest that if there is a true competitive market for labour then labour becomes more flexible, with employers substituting for one set of labour skills by another, but without having to change the personnel. Workers 'reskill' to meet the changing demands of economic growth. If employers can choose between hiring appropriately educated workers and providing on-the-job training for less educated workers then it is more difficult and less necessary to make longterm forecasts.[72]

In contrast Johnes put the general case for manpower planning (or HRP - human resource planning) as follows: -

> *The planners forecasts do not need to be perfect; in order to be useful they need only to be better than the forecasts implicitly made by the consumers of education. In other words, it would be misleading to compare real world imperfections in planners' forecasts with an unrealistic ideal where individual consumers of education (unlike the planners) enjoy perfect foresight.*[73]

Blaug (1967)[74] suggests that differing views on the role of manpower planning reflect two views of the state of the world. On one extreme is a view that sees "*fixed relationships and rigidities in both educational and employment practices*", on the other is a view in which "*flexibility and substitutability between different skills and different ways of acquiring skills*" is the characteristic feature.[75] These differences are reflected in the curricular debates of the education systems, as we will now see.

401-403, and Sheehan, J. (1989) 'Education and the Economy' p 2, unpublished paper submitted as part of Home Country Report to OECD Review Team and summarised in published text, i.e. OECD (1991). Reviews of National Policy for Education: Ireland, Paris: OECD.

70 See Psacharopolous & Woodhall, opcit. p72.

71 For example, Hollister (1967) and (1983), Johnes (1993) p63, and Psacharapolous & Woodhall (1985) p74-102. See also Psacharapolous, G. (1991) 'From Manpower planning to labour market analysis in 'International Labour Review, Vol. 130, 1991, No. 4, p459-43 and Blaug, M. (1976) 'The empirical status of human capital theory:A slightly jaundiced survey', Journal of Economic Literature, Sept.14, 1976, p827-55.

72 For an interesting study of differing labour distributions see Krais, B. (1979), 'Relationships between Education and Employment and their Impact on Education and Labour Market Policies:A France-German Study: Berlin:CEDEFOP

73 Johnes, opcit. p63.

74 'A Cost Benefit Approach to Educational Planning in Developing Countries', Economic Department Report. No. 157, Washington:World Bank. Cited in Psacharapolous & Woodhall opcit. p76.

75 Psacharapolous & Woodhall opcit. p77.

Curriculum Diversification

We noted above the references to 'general' and 'specific' skills in human resources and the distinctions between technical skills, social skills and research and development capacity. This differentiation in skill types raises the question of differentiation or specialisation in the education or training provided. Underlying this distinction is the differentiation between 'general' or liberal education and 'vocational' or technical education, and questions of the type of curricula most suited to the development of relevant labour skills.

Luaglo and Lillis (1988) present an overview on these issues with an international perspective, in the period 1960's to date.[76] Coffey (1992) and Sultana (1992) present studies of the issue in U.K. and Malta, respectively.[77] Psacharapolous in a series of recent papers,[78] argues strongly against the 'diversification' or 'vocationalisation' of secondary curricula as an efficient means of raising either labour productivity or increasing the social return on educational investment. The studies referred to above suggest that two distinct phases of the productive skills acquisition processes are generally posited:

(i) a 'pre-vocational education' stage, itself or preparation for vocational training, and

(ii) the 'skills training' processes.[79]

Watts (1983) made a related distinction between "orientation" and 'preparation'[80] and Lauglo and Lillis make a further distinction between "hard" or specific skills and 'soft' or highly generalized skills.[81] For Stahl et al (1992) the focus is on the *'key or core skills'* of decision making and social competency which are claimed to be of increasing importance for a modern workforce and ought therefore be the object of vocational education and training.[82]

Studies of curriculum change in secondary education can be seen in terms of their general contribution to the enhancement of productive skills of either the 'soft' or the 'hard' variety. Franklin's study (1985) - *'The*

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76 See Luaglo & Lillis (ed.) (1988) Vocationalising Education:an International Perspective Oxford: Pergamon Press.

77 Coffey (1992) Schools and Work:Developments in VocationalEducation, London: Cassell. Sultana, R.G. (1992) Education and National Development:historical and critical perspectives on Vocational Education in Malta: Msida; Mireva.

78 Psacharapolous, G. [1991 (a)] Vocational Education Theory, VoCED101, including hints for 'Vocational Planners' in Int. J. Educational Development, Vol. 11, No. 3, p193-199, Psacharapolous [1991(b)] 'Education and work:The Perrenial Mismatch and Ways to solve it' in 'The Vocational Aspect of Education, No.114, p127-132. I am grateful to the author for bringing these papers to my attention.

79 The distinction between 'Continuation Education' and Technical Education' in the 1930 Vocational Education Act (Ireland) reflects this distinction also.

80 Watts, A.G. (1983) Education, Unemployment and the Future of Work. Milton Keynes Open University Press, , p11-14.

81 Luaglo & Lillis, opcit. p4. The authors go on to suggest interestingly ."..the "hard" emphasis will prevail when practical subjects are justified by relevance for jobs in a depressed labour market (employable skills) when they are taught by poorly qualified teachers, or more generally when a highly didactic educational culture prevails in an education system with detailed syllabuses imposed on schools."

82 Stahl, T., Nyhan, B. & D'Aloja, P (1992) The Learning Organisation:A Vision for Human Resource Development, Brussels; Eurotechnet, E.C. Commission p30. The authors present (p32-33) an illustrative skills profile for a Toolmaker in a modern (flexible) manufacturing environment and identify Sensi-motor and knowledge skills as requiring less training development than autonomous decision-making, 'co-operation/communication skills and the cognitive requirements of problem solving'..

Social Efficiency movement and curriculum change 1939-1979 illuminates the curriculum changes attempted in one U.S. state over an extended period of time during which 'soft' skills for efficient productive activity were among the objectives of education as influenced by the broader social efficiency movement.[83] McCulloch et al (1985) provides a study on the changes to technical or 'hard' skills included in school curricula and the ways in which they changed in response to the perceived long-run skill needs of the labour market.[84]

Certification

We noted above the contention, cited by Psacharapolous & Woodhall, that manpower planning as a process was underpinned by a strong assumption of a fixed relationship between the educational qualifications of workers and their subsequent productivity. In his paper Psacharapolous [1991(a)] the author contends that "*there exists a rich documentation on the substitutability between, firstly, different occupations, and secondly different educational levels within a given occupation*"[85]. Dale and Pires, in an aptly titled paper, "*Linking People and Jobs:The Indeterminate Place of Educational Credentials'*, using Portugese data, suggest that the "most serious" lacuna consequent on these assumptions (of the education - employment relation) concern what might be broadly called the politics of work."[86] A study of work organisation and qualifications in which German-French comparisons were made yielded the following conclusions which tend to confirm the validity of the perspective of Dale and Pires: -

> *There are great diversities in the types of work and in work organisation, even when the identical or similar technologies are used, whereby no differences in profitability are obvious. These diversities are even greater when the qualification profiles of the jobholders are taken into consideration.*[87]

As Hassain (1975) points out, it is not that there is no technical connection between occupations and educational qualifications but that the relationship "*is not purely technical.*"[88] Ronald Dore in "*The*

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83 See Franklin B.M. (1985). In Goodson, I. (1985) "Social Histories of the Secondary Curriculum:Subjects for Study, Lewes:Falmer Press, p239-268. The influence of "technical rationality" and the social efficiency movement generally, on the practice of curriculum development in this period, is examined also in this paper.

84 McCulloch, G., Jenkins,E., Leyton,D. (1985) Technological Revolution:The Politics of School Science and Technology in England and Wales since 1945. Lewes: Falmer.

85 Psacharopolous (1991 (a)) 'Vocational Education Theory etc.' p194.

86 Dale, R., & Pires, E., (1984) 'Linking People and Jobs:The Indeterminate Place of Educational Credentials' in Broadfoot, P, (ed) Selection, Certification and Control Social Issues in Educational Assessment, Lewes: Falmer, p53.

87 Krais, B., (1977) 'Relationship between Education and Employement and their Impact on Education and Labour Market Policies - A Franco-German Study, Berlin, CEDEFOP, p32.

88 Hassain, A., (1975) 'The Economy and the Educational System in Capitalist Societies' in Dale, R., et al (ed.) Schooling and the National Interest, Lewes: Falmer Press in association with Open University Press, p160. Consistent with the Marxist insight Hassain suggests (p161) "once the economy is conceived not only in terms of its technical relations but also its social relations, the relations between the economy and the educational system in capitalist societies appear in a different light'. Marshal' (1950) already referred to above, provides a succinct early statement of the issues and is worth quoting in full:"*I see no signs of any relaxation of the bonds that tie education to occupation. On the contrary, they appear to be growing stronger. Great and increasing respect is paid to certificates, matriculation, degrees and diplomas as qualifications for employment, and their freshness does not fade with the passage of the years. A man of 40 may be judged by his performance in an examination taken at the age of 15. The ticket obtained on leaving school or college is for a life journey. The man with a third-class ticket who later feels able to claim a seat in the first-class carriage will not be admitted, even if he is*

Diploma Disease" (1976) using evidence from a wide range of countries, argues that the critical function of educational qualifications lies in its use for sorting and selection purposes:

> *the more widely education certifications are used for occupational selection; the faster the rate of qualification inflation, and the more examination oriented schooling becomes at the expense of genuine education.*[89]

Sorting Human Resource

This brings us to the second major function of schooling in contributing to labour productivity - that of "sorting human resources"[90] or *'as a screening device which evaluates pupils and grants diplomas'.*[91] Kostecki contends that notwithstanding the other uses of school evaluation (as a means to improve teaching and learning) "*The purpose of evaluation, as it is still most frequently used, is primarily the grading and classifying of individuals.*" He continues:

> *Moreover, a persistent tendency towards 'formalisation' and 'rationalisation' of the recruitment and promotion procedures in production is likely to increase the pressure for a more specific and rigid sorting of human resources in vocational schooling.*[92]

This final point echoes a distinction made by Turner between "sponsored and contest mobility" as ideal-type patterns of upward mobility.[93] Looked at from an economic point of view, this filtering process is about identifying those persons who are most likely to be productive in given occupations or labour market situations. Central to this view is the assumption that there is not absolute substitutability (i.e. equality) between individuals in their potential capacity for particular labour market 'slots'. Johnes (1992) suggests two models for the understanding of this process.[94] In the first, employers use success within the education system as a means of identifying those workers who are potentially the most productive. Those who are better "qualified" are paid more on the basis that they are more productive than less educated workers doing

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prepared to pay the difference. That would not be fair to the others. He must go back to the start and re-book, by passing the prescribed examination. And it is unlikely that the state will offer to pay his return fare. This is not, of course, true of the whole field of employment, but it is a fair description of a large and significant part of it, whose extension is being constantly advocated. I have, for instance, recently read an article in which it is urged that every aspirant to an administrative or managerial post in business should be required to qualify 'by passing the matriculation or equivalent examination'. This development is partly the result of the systematisation of techniques in more and more professional, semi-professional and skilled occupations, though I must confess that some of the claims of so-called professional bodies to exclusive possession of esoteric skill and knowledge appear to me to be rather thin. But is is also fostered by the refinement of the selective process within the educational system itself. The more confident the claim of education to be able to sift human material during the early years of life, the more is mobility concentrated within those years, and consequently limited thereafter."

89 Dore, R., (1976) The Diploma Disease: Education Qualification and Development, London, George Allen and Unwin, p72.

90 Kostecki, opcit. p16.

91 ibid. p7.

92 ibid.

93 See Turner, R.H., (1971) 'Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the School System' in Hopper, E., (ed.) Readings in the Theory of Educational Systems London:Hutchison University Library p71-90. In the same volume , Hopper goes on to classify education systems on the basis of the selection processes they employ. See Hopper, E. (1971), 'A Typology for the Classification of Educational Systems', in Hopper, E., (ed.) opcit. p91-110.

94 See Johnes (1992) op.cit. p18-22. The signalling model is attributed to Spence, M. (1973) Job Market Signalling', Quarterly Journal of Economics' No. 8, p355-74: , the screening model to Arrow, K. (1973) 'Higher Education as a Filter', Journal of Public Economics, 2, 193-216.

the same job. Education operates as a signalling device to employers of the likely productivity of employees. The model is therefore called the 'signalling' model. The second model is referred to as a 'screening' model, in which the focus is not on the likely productivity of an individual at one job but on the likely productivity of workers when assigned to jobs with differing demands. Performance in the education system is again a proxy for expected productivity and therefore used by employers as a means of sorting or screening workers into different posts. (Thus the signalling model is a subset or special case of the screening model). The distinctive element in both models is the important suggestion that education may identify productive capacities, without necessarily enhancing them. It simply confers credentials that employers can use to select workers and to determine relative wages. Johnes marshalls a significant range of empirical studies which examine the screening model and test its validity.[95] Psacharapolous & Woodhall (1985) also review the economic arguments.[96] They suggest as does Johnes, that employers continued use of education qualifications for selection purposes suggests there must be some additional service being provided in addition to the screening function provided by education.[97] They go on to point out however, that the belief that education raises the productivity of workers is not entirely incompatible with the idea that many employers use education as a convenient screening device.

> *It may be that they do not need the skills directly imparted by education but do value the attitudes and abilities normally associated with education.... In other words, the productivity and screening functions of education are not mutually exclusive and both bring economic benefits.*[98]

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95 Studies cited, Johnes, opcit. p20-21 include Layard & Psacharapolous (1974) 'The Screening Hypothesis and the returns to education', Journal of Political Economy 82, p985-98; Horowitz and Sherman (1980) 'A Direct measure of the relationship between human capital and productivity "Journal of Human Resources", 15, p 67-76: Williams & Gordon (1981) 'Perceived earnings functions and ex ant rates of return to post-compulsory education in England, Higher Education, 10, p199-227.

96 Psacharapolous & Woodhall, opcit. p44-46.

97 See Psacharapolous & Woodhall p45 & Johnes p21. "If the main purpose of education is to provide a screening mechanism, it is highly unlikely that the system would have survived several centuries in the face of cheaper alternatives."

98 Psacharopolous & Woodhall, opcit. p45

The Regulation of Unemployment

So far the focus of our exploration has been the relationship between education and employment. A corollary of that relationship, yet with distinctive features, is the role of education in the regulation of unemployment.[99] This aspect of the economic function of schooling received considerable attention following the economic slump of the late 1970's to mid 1980's and the high general and youth unemployment which followed, especially in Europe.[100]

Following Kostecki (1985) it is suggested that schooling may contribute to the reduction of unemployment in three ways: -it may diminish the supply of the 'secondary labour force' by offering an alternative occupations; it may adjust the skills of the unemployed to market needs (retraining); or it may turn some of the unemployed into students.[101]

The first of these functions links with our previous discussions and raises again all of the reflections about: manpower planning, the nature/range of productive skills, the organisational and curricular requirements and the adjustments needed following changes in employment, and, finally, the use of school-related evaluations/qualifications in selecting workers. The remaining functions both focus on the "storage" of excess labour capacity either as a temporary or longer term measure.

Kostecki (op.cit.) suggests that one can distinguish between two basic categories of the labour force[102]:(i) primary labour force and (ii) secondary labour force. The *primary labour force* is essentially composed of individuals who are the principal income earners for their households and have little option but to stay in the labour market to maintain the household income. The secondary labour market is made up of individuals with somewhat more flexibility in their options - young people living at home, some married women and retired people. For some of these people, the opportunity cost of choosing not to be employed, may be less: education may then be more acceptable alternative option. In respect of young people schooling (or training programmes) may be an alternative for those who are unemployed, "a *'waiting room' for at least a certain fraction of the labour force for which there is no demand in the labour market.*"[103]

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99 Given the nature and persistence of unemployment in the Irish labour market as outlined above, it is to be expected that this set of relationships are of particular significance in Ireland.

100 See Schwartz,B., (1981) 'The Integration of Young People in Society and Working Life' Report for the Prime Minister of France; Berlin; CEDEFOP, and Commission of European Communities (1987) 'Transition of Young People from Education to Adult and Working Life':Social Europe supplement5/87, Brussels; EEC Commission and Brown and Ashton (ed.) (1987) Education Unemployment and Labour Markets', Lewes: Falmer Press.

101 Kostecki (1985) opcit. p12.

102 ibid.

103 ibid. p13. For an interesting exposition of the complementary contributions of 'the opportunity structure model', and the 'socialisation model' to the understanding of how young people actually handle the options between schooling and a declining demand for youth labour see Furlong, A. (1987) "Coming to Terms with the Declining Demand for Youth Labour" in Brown and Ashton (ed.) (1987) opcit. p57-70.
Raffe, D. (1987) Youth 'Unemployment in the United Kingdom 1979-1984', also in Brown and Ashton (ed.) opcit. is less sanguine about the distinction posited between youth unemployment and general adult unemployment:
"..the causes of the recent rise in youth unemployment are substantially the same as the causes of the rise in adult unemployment. The preceding analysis failed to identify factors specific to the youth labour market that have caused youth unemployment to rise substantially

Kostecki goes on, consistently, to suggest that during periods of high unemployment governments acting rationally should be expected to increase their subsidies to schools "*to have full advantage of the beneficent impact of schooling on the equilibration of the labour market.*"[104] He goes on to suggest that this "*waiting room*" function should be performed using humanities rather than technical or natural sciences programmes, on the basis that these programmes have the lowest per capita cost.[105]

It is to be anticipated that the function of education in the regulation of the labour force and the storage of excess labour would not always be explicitly acknowledged as an instrument of government policy in public documentation and policy statements. It may be, however, that the record of the non-public deliberations of senior public servants and politicians would yield evidence of the pursuit of such a policy.

Equality of Educational Opportunity

A policy with much more likelihood of being acknowledged in public rhetoric, and one with significant economic implications, is that of 'equality of educational opportunity'. For Marshall (1950) "*the right of the citizen [in this process of selection and mobility] is the right to equality of opportunity.*"[106] For Kostecki (1985), two types of argument are advanced in favour of the promotion of social equality through equality of chances in schooling[107]. Firstly, equality of chances in schooling is a pre-requisite for the efficient allocation of human resources, in both education and production, otherwise the 'best talents' may not be given the highest level of education which leads to maximising the 'social returns on a given 'investment'.[108] His second argument sits less comfortably in an economic analysis, being a political argument:

> *Equality of chances in schooling is likely to gain political support (and in this sense become a public good) since the largest portion of the electorate will probably benefit from it.*[109]

'Equality of Opportunity' is not to be equated with a 'social demand' approach to education provision which implies that education at every level should be offered to all those who fulfill minimum standards.[110] It can

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since 1979; instead it explained why the factors which caused adult unemployment to rise should have affected youth unemployment disproportionally. By the same token, specific remedies for youth unemployment - whether focussed on training, wages, or any other target - can only have a modest effect on the problem, except insofar as they simply remove young people from the workforce, if adult unemployment is not also reduced." p243.
See also Raffe, D. (1993) 'Participation of 16-18 year olds in Education and Training', In Education Economics, Vol. 1., No. 1, 1993 p61-68, where the complexities of the interaction of youth education and training systems with the labour market for the period 1974-1990 is succinctly examined.

104 Kostecki, opcit. p13.

105 ibid. Kostecki goes on to suggest that "the 'bound rationality' of political decision-making in the area of school finance is often in conflict with the employment - regulating function of school." p13-14.

106 Marshall, T.H., (1950) 'Citizenship and Social Class' in Marshall & Bottomore (1992) Citizenship and Social Class, London: Pluto, p38. This quote follows the extensive section quoted at footnote 261 above.

107 Kostecki p11.

108 ibid.

co-exist with a rigid selection arrangement, according to Kostecki.[111] That this is possible is clarified to some extent by the three types of equity, which according to McMahon (1982) can be discerned in the literature: [112]

- horizontal equity, usually taken to mean equal treatment of equals:
- vertical equity, which refers to unequal treatment of unequals: [113]
- intergeneralisational equity, which is concerned with ensuring that inequalities in one generation are not simply perpetuated.[114]

The dimensions on which the distribution of educational access are reported and commented on will vary from society to society but the following are among the ones frequently raised in discussion:

- income
- social class
- gender
- religion
- race
- language,
- urban/rural and
- ability as measured by some agreed convention.[115]

Considerable complexities are attached to the measurement of the effects of educational investments in addressing equity issues in each of these dimensions.[116] Drawing on a wide range of studies, Psacharapolous & Woodhall suggest a range of ways in which educational investment effects the distribution of income in developing countries. The position adopted by Blaug (1978) reflects a widely held view among neo-classical and Keynesian economists that although the distribution of schooling as such is not a powerful instrument for equalizing income distribution, particularly in comparison with tax and expenditure policies, it is nevertheless "*one non-negligible instrument for equalising income distribution and it may be even one that is more publicly palatable than the more powerful, direct*

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109 ibid.

110 ibid. For the classical statement of this position see Robbins (1963) Report on Higher Education, London: HMSO.

111 ibid. p11.

112 McMahon, N. (1982) 'Efficiency and Equity Criteria for Educational Budgeting and Finance, In Financing Education:Overcoming Inefficiency and Inequity, McMahon, W. & Geske, T. (ed.) Champaign Ill:University of Illinois Press and cited in Psacharopolous and Woodhall, opcit. p251.

113 It is this interpretation of equity which permits Kostecki to argue the consistency of "rigid selection" with an 'equality of chances' approach, pointing up the elitism of meritocracy.

114 For a discussion of the conflict between 'efficiency and 'equity' see Arrow, K.J. (1993), 'Excellence and Equity in Higher Education' in Education Economics, Vol. I, No.1 1993, p5-12.

115 This list is based on Psacharapolous & Woodhall opcit. p247.

116 ibid. See p249-283.

instruments available to government"[117]. However, World Bank assessments of the equity implications of a number of Bank-financed projects reveal "*low access or high rates of wastage among certain groups...due to socio-economic or cultural factors. The political power of middle and upper-class groups and elites and their determination to retain economic and educational privileges are often strong motivating forces in the provision of education.*"[118] These are observations more likely to receive attention among neo-marxist economists.

The implication of both these assessments is that we must take into account the political and social realities, as well as economic criteria, when evaluating educational investment over time. Before acting on that view in this study, we will first examine the financing of education, looking at the range of mechanisms proposed by economists for the financing of education and the relative distribution of public, social and private costs.

Financing Education

Contemporary data for 1988 and 1991 collated in the OECD publications, Education at a Glance:OECD Indicators (1992) and (1993), identify 'public' and 'private' sources of educational finance in member countries.[119] The 1993 publication further subdivides public expenditure into that sourced by central government, that sourced by regional and local authorities, and that sourced internationally.
The basic arguments used by neo-classical economists to justify public (state) expenditure on education are well exemplified in the following extract from Lane (1992).

> *Public expenditure in education is intended to improve the allocation and distribution of resources. Private markets underprovide for education. One reason is that human capital (an individuals personal skills and training) is not good collateral on credit markets so that individuals may be unable to fully finance their education through borrowing against their future earning power. A second reason is that education provides positive externalities. This argument has both economic and social aspects...it is contended that education has an important spillover effect, in that a skilled workforce is essential in achieving economic growth:this is a benefit that cannot be fully appropriated by individuals and hence private markets will not allocate sufficient resources to education. In addition, a high rate of literacy is considered to be an important requirement for a properly operating democratic political system. Again, the cost of education is high relative to low incomes so that public provision is warranted on distributional grounds (if society makes the value judgement that the education of all individuals enables a fairer distribution of economic opportunities)*..120

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117 Blaug, M. (1878) 'Thoughts on the Distribution of Schooling and the Distribution of earnings in Developing Countries', Paper for International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, (1978). cited in Psacharopolous & Woodhall opcit. p272.

118 Psacharapolous & Woodhall, op cit. p282.

119 OECD/CERI (1982) Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, Paris:OECD, p49.
OECD/CERI (1993) Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators, Paris:OECD, p76-81.

120 Lane, P (1991) 'Government Intervention' in O'Hagan, J.W. (ed.) The Economy of Ireland:Policy and Performance, Dublin: Irish Management Institute, p144.

The OECD data demonstrate the variation in contemporary approaches to the funding of education, with private sources accounting for a high of 27.7% of education expenditures (in Germany) and a low of zero percent in Norway and Sweden. Ireland is the only country reported as utilising public funds from international sources for educational expenditure: 11.5% of total public educational expenditure in Ireland was supplied by the European Community in 1991.

Adam Smith in an appendix to Book V of The Wealth of Nations presented one of the first discussions of alternative mechanisms for funding education.[121] He identified three ways in which educational institutions might receive their finance:

(a) by endowments made for that purpose in which the sources of funding disclaimed any rights to manage or influence the process and operated a trust fund for the institution which was managed by others;

(b) by an "extraneous jurisdiction", which exercised a controlling authority with the transfer of funding, and

(c) by the "fees or honoraries of the scholars."[122]

Smith saw superior merit in a system of financing in which "*the greater part arises from the fees or honoraries of his pupils.*"[123] The broad preference of Adam Smith is echoed in the late twentieth century, particularly in Friedman (1953), West (1965)[124] and Chubb and Moe (1990).[125] West (1965) is credited with drawing attention to a distinction between state *finance* of education and state provision of education so that arguing for state financing does not necessarily imply state provision for education. This distinction is rendered as one between purchaser and provider in Cordingley and Kogan (1993) and Boyle (1994).[126] Swanson and King (1992) present a contemporary analysis of the relationships between alternative financial support systems, governance structures for schooling, and schooling quality. They make the case, like Adam Smith before them, for increased resourcing of schooling via expenditures controlled by the pupil as client.[127] Gordon (1992) presents a 'competing ideological discourse' in which "community" rather than 'markets', the state rather than the individual, are presented as models and mechanisms for the

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121 See Williams, G. (1987), "Changing Patterns of Educational Finance and their anticipated Behaviour and Educational Outcomes" in Thomas, H. & Simkins, T. (ed.) Economics and the Management of Education:Emergent Themes, Lewes: Falmer Press, p34.

122 ibid. On the basis of Williams' presentation it would appear that Smith attributed the lax standards of late 18th century Oxford to the use of mechanism (a) above:Edinburgh University, being credited with a market-type model of funding (c) above for its public lectures, owed its reputation for higher standards to that fact.

123 ibid.p35.

124 Friedman, M. (1953), Essays in Positive Economics, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, West,E.G. (1965) Education and the State, London:Institute of Economic Affairs and Chubb, J.E. & Moe, T.M. (1990) Politics, Markets and America's Schools, Washington D.C., The Brookings Institute.

125 Williams (1987) opcit. p36.

126 Cordingley, P & Kogan, M. (1992) In Support of Education, The Functioning of Local Government, London: Kogan, Page, & Boyle, R. (1994) Some Reflections on the Implications for Public Management Structures and Processes, Irish Education Studies, Vol. 13, p282-288. See also Knight, B. (1987) 'Managing the Honey Pots', in Thomas and Simkins (opcit.) for an examination of the use of the distinction in the U.K. to effect educational changes desired by central governments.

127 Swanson, A.D., King, R.A. (1992) 'The Impact of school governance restructuring on public financial support systems" in Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1992, p173-185.

most efficient provision of education.[128] This contemporary debate on the funding and the related governance of education has been frequently focused on the issue of loans (particularly to fund the cost of third-level/university education), and the use of vouchers, as a way of funding primary or secondary education.[129] This dichotomy between public and private sector financing has predominently political and managerial implications. It could be said that what matters from a national economic point of view is the amount of social expenditure on education, rather than who gets to spend it. The matters are, however, of critical concern in contemporary debates in many countries.

OECD [1992(b)] contends that according to who finances and provides education, four combinations are possible: -

(i) private finance and private provision (e.g. private schools financed by tuition fees)

(ii) public finance and private provision (e.g. private schools fully subsidised by the state)

(iii) private finance and public provision (e.g. vocational and trade courses in public sector colleges financed through payments by firms)

(iii) public finance and public provision (the norm in tax-financed public sector institutions).[130]

The evolution of a particular financing regime in any state is related to the overall way in which each state approached the balancing of individualism and collective need. Ashford (1987) links the establishment of public financing and provision of education with the development of free health care and improved child care within an emerging welfare state provision.[131] Following the quotation from Lane (1991), cited above, three main arguments have been used to justify public subsidy of education.[132] From an economic viewpoint, the first has to do with the role of externalities or spillover benefits from education. It is argued that there are benefits from the education of individuals which they are unable to capture as individuals. External benefits cited include crime reduction, social cohesion, support of democracy, technological innovation and intergenerational benefits (which refer to the benefits parents derive from their own education and transmit to their children), benefits in standards of health, nutrition and fertility.[133] Because those benefits do not accrue to individuals they will not pay for them. Because they are public goods, they are publicly funded. The second argument concerns equity and equality of opportunity. Basically this argument points to imperfections in the market as a distribution mechanism for education. Because access to the required information and funds is unevenly distributed, the unmediated market would be neither efficient nor fair. The third economic argument for public funding of education is built on the case of

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128 Gordon, L. (1992) 'The state, devolution and educational reform in New Zealand', in Journal of Education Policy, 7, 2, 1992, p187-203.

129 See Woodhall, M. 91970) Student Loans:A Review of Experience in Scandanavia and Elsewhere, London:Harrop p12-32. "The arguments for and against loans." For a discussion of the loans issue:and West, E.G. (1965) Education and the State for a discussion of the vouchers issue, also Johnes, (1992) opcit p 110 f.f.

130 See OECD (1992) Public Educational Expenditure, Costs and Financing:An analysis of trends 1970-1988, Paris, OECD, p56-57.

131 See Ashford, D.E. (1987) opcit. p44-59.

132 Psacharapolous & Woodhall, p137 f.f.

133 ibid. p53.
See below, p.90ff, "in respect of argument re relationship between education and fertility.

economies of scale.[134] It is argued that it is more efficient to finance and provide education publicly because of the efficiencies possible in undertaking the process in the macro level in each state.

The issues re financing of education may be summarised as:who benefits? who pays? who should pay? The mechanisms for the allocation of costs and the distribution of benefits in any given state are determined by the political and social contexts of the given time and place.

Education and Consumption

We noted above Skilbeck's reference to *education as a commodity*[135]and the basic assumption of neo-classical economics that "*the welfare of individuals depends on the goods and services they consume.*"[136] If schooling is looked at from this perspective, it then becomes a process or service which contributes to the student's satisfaction and has characteristics commonly attributed to consumer goods: [137]
For example,

(i) the demand for schooling is likely to increase as a houshold's disposable income grows;

(ii) the principle of declining marginal utility applies, i.e. the student's satisfaction (or return) provided by additional time units spent on schooling will progressively decline.

This would appear to be consistent with the perspective of 'human capital theory' which suggests that additional investment in schooling increases with per capita income but also to suggest, that relative opportunity cost rises with income, contradicting the point made above re higher opportunity cost for the less well off. The dilemma may be resolved by distinguishing between 'leisure' schooling and vocational schooling which contributes more directly to student's productive skills rather than to student's immediate satisfaction. These observations may be pertinent in giving an economic rationale for the reported preferences of working class children for vocational training.

Kostecki makes two further points about education and consumption. Firstly, he reports a French study which identifies a tendency for educated households to behave as if their revenues were higher than those of less educated households irrespective of actual resources: there is a positive correlation between level of education and the consumption of high quality goods[138] He also suggests that education"may be expected to have a 'positive impact on consumers' rationality of choice", by counteracting the heavy advertising and

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134 See Psacharopolous & Woodhall, opcit. p138 for the argumentation on this point.
135 See p54 above, note no. 4.
136 See John, A., (1991) p.56 in O'Hagan (ed.) p.54-109.
137 See Kostecki, opcit. p14-15 for a discussion of schooling and consumption.
138 Kostecki, opcit. p14. Citing Tarbard, N. (1974) Besoins et Aspirations des Familles et de Jeunes', Paris, CREDOC; CNAF.

mass marketing with "psychological independence and skills."[139] Both observations are presented as contributions by education to economic development.

Related to the points above, Kostecki suggests that education may be seen as a service which enriches one's life through increasing the variety, depth and range of intellectual and aesthetic (and even moral) pursuits available. It is an investment in future consumption. This idea has both its private and its 'spillover' effects (externalities) which are the basis of arguments in favour of private and public funding for such education, i.e. seeing "cultural" education as both a private and a public good. Well-educated citizens, with a certain common cultural heritage, produce benefits for society at large and for other individuals. The development and consolidation of national identity, the dissemination of a national language, the reduction of cultural dependence, are all 'public goods' developed through education, which are used to justify public investment in education.[140] The economic function of the social cohesion created by this form of education is viewed differently in neo-classical and neo-marxist analysis. For both schools of thought the function of social control/harmonisation, and its related ideological promotion, is a central function of education, with a major (if not exclusive) economic rationale.[141]

Summary

This Chapter sets out to sketch a conceptual framework with which to examine the relationship between education and economy. A range of relevant literature has been reviewed. Some attention has been devoted to identifying the wider philosophical and historical fremework in which discussion of the relationship between education and economy takes place. The position adopted in this Chapter in respect of these differing systems of thought, is to treat them as complementary rather than mutually exclusive. The concepts drawn from the Marxist and from the classical tradition each provide illuminating insights which help clarify relationships and lead to the delineation of policy options.

Where concepts appear to be mutually exclusive or in tension, the task is synthesing the insights into a richer totality. Thus, it is not just a matter of 'market provision' or 'public provision' of education, of

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139 Kostecki, opcit. p15.

140 See Kostecki, opcit. p10.

141 See for example, Franklin, B.H. (1986) Building the American Community:The School Curriculum and the Search for Social Control, Lewes: Falmer Press, also Paquette (1991) Social Purpose and Schooling, Lewes: Falmer Press. Voege (1975) 'The Diffusion of Keynsian Macroeconomics through American High School Text books' in Reid & Deckar (ed.) Case Studies in Curriculum Change, London:Falmer Press, p204-239 provides and interesting study of the role of schooling in developing/reflecting dominant economic theory in the U.S.

individualism or collectivism but a search for the balance which, in any individual social, political and economic setting, best meets the aspirations for "the good life," espoused by that community.

PART 3

CONTEXTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEES IN IRELAND 1930-1990

CHAPTER 4

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXTS

> *The demography of Ireland has been unique in Europe since the nineteenth century. It's demographic transition is still incomplete. But radical convergence is now taking place which is bringing the Irish demographic regime closely in line with that of the rest of Europe"*[1]

> *Ideological explanations of fertility change are becoming popular because of the inadequacy of socio-economic models alone to explain the international trend and timing of fertility transitions and regional differences.*[2]

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to examine the demographic contexts in which the vocational education system developed in the Irish Free State and Republic, in the periods 1930 to 1990. The chapter is presented in three sections. This first will outline briefly aspects of demography in which an interplay with the education system is claimed to exist. The second section will present the basic demographic data for the period, together with the interpretations presented in the literature.[3] The third section will outline relationships between the development of the vocational education system and the demographic phenomena of the period suggested by the study data.

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1 Coleman, D.A. (1992), "The Demographic Transition in Ireland in International Context": in Goldthorne, J.H. and Whelan, C.T. (eds), The Development of Industrial Society in Ireland, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

2 Coleman (1992) opcit. p72.

3 Contemporary estimates of population data first began in Ireland with William Petty in 1697. The first census was held in 1821. The first Census based on a household canvass took place in 1841. A Census for all of Ireland also took place in 1861, 1870, 1881, 1901, 1911. There was no Census in 1921. From 1926, two series of data, for the Republic (twenty-six counties) and Northern Ireland (six counties) are available. For an evaluation of the early data see Connell, K.H. (1950), The Population of Ireland, 1750-1845, Oxford: Clarendon Press. Summary data from censuses are provided by C.S.O. in Diskette H. November 1993 Release.
The primary sources for the study are the reports of the various censuses of population which took place, 1926, 1936, 1946, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966 1971, 1981, 1986, and 1991 for the twenty six counties. In addition two reports which focus on emigration - NESC (1991) The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration and the Report on Emigration and other Population Problems 1948-1954 published by the Stationery Office,(1954) provide relevant data. Collations of this primary data available in secondary texts have been very useful in assembling the material presented here. Since the Census of Population for 1966, data has been collected on the age at which respondents ended full time education and the type of institution attended. Responses to these questions are presented in Vol. 7 of the 1966 Census of Population of Ireland, Vol. 10 of the 1981 Census and Vol. 4 of the 1986 Census. Various cross-classifications, by occupation, industry and particulars of education, are contained in those volumes.
The annual Reports of the Department of Education (Tuarascail an Roinn Oideachais) is the primary source of data on education and vocational education, used in this paper. In addition, "Investment in Education" (1965) contains a great deal of relevant statistical material, particularly in the volume of annexes and appendices.
Four studies, Sheehan (1976), Tussing (1978), Murphy (1983) and DKM (1987) have examined the impact of demographic change on education, particularly for the period 1975 to 1990. The studies on emigration referred to above, have also addressed some issues about the interface between education and emigration. A review of the educational research output of Irish universities has yielded no study in the area of demography and its impact on education.

The observations from Coleman above alert us to a possible significance for education, and maybe vocational education in particular, to an understanding of the maintenance and subsequent changes in the distinctive Irish fertility regime. Demographic change, as change in the size of age-cohorts, has direct impact on the education system, via its implications for the demand for education places and because of its implications for the labour market supply. Changes in birth rates lead to changes in child age-cohorts and may thus influence the level of demand for places in the education system. Changes in age cohort size also have indirect influences on the education system via their implications for the labour market. These can be presented as twofold. Firstly, in conditions where labour market equilibrium is unsettled by the arrival of significantly increased numbers of school leavers, there is a pressure on the school system to respond by the retention of larger numbers within it, for longer periods of time. By extending the school career, the labour market gains a temporary respite and costs are transferred to the education system. Secondly, increased numbers of entrants to the labour market enables those who are employing labour to be more selective and to require that applicants present themselves with educational histories more closely attuned to the demands of the workplace.[4] It may be possible to examine the growth of the vocational education system and curricular changes in the general school system, in the light of these factors. In addition to age cohort size, three further demographic phenomena are of relevance to the provision of education services: population density, migration and dependency ratios.

Density

Population density is a demographic characteristic which has a direct bearing on: the number of centres (schools) required, and the size of schools. Ireland, with a density (in 1987) as low as 52.0 persons per square kilometre, compared with a mean density for thirty four industrial countries of 416.8 persons per square kilometre[5], is likely to encounter recurring policy dilemmas about appropriate school size, school/centre rationalization and school transport.

Internal migration from rural to urban locations in the course of the period, and the internal variations in population density are matters that also have education significance. The educational planning required created a range of challenges and opportunities (or problems and difficulties). The growth of cities and large towns (and the migration away from rural settlement), particularly in the period 1960 to 1990 then, requires some delineation with a view to consequences for the growth of vocational education.

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the interface between education and emigration. A review of the educational research output of Irish universities has yielded no study in the area of demography and its impact on education.

4 The contacts between demography and education outlined above are posited in all the major texts which punctuate the development of the vocational education system from the 1927 Commission on Technical Education Report, through Investment in Education (1965) to OECD Report, (1991). These issues were thoroughly analysed in the 1980's in a number of publications: - Breen, R. (1984) Education and the Labour Market, ESRI Paper No. 119, Hannon, D. (1986) Schooling and the Labour Market, Shannon Curriculum Development Centre, and Danaher, Frain and Sexton (1985) Manpower Policy in Ireland, NESC No. 82.

As indicated above the mean density of population in Ireland is extremely low - 52.0 persons per square kilometre compared with industrial country averages of 416.8 persons per square kilometre. This statistic disguises the distribution of population within the country and the processes of change in that distribution over time. In the period 1911 to 1951 the population of Ireland (26 counties) declined by 5.7% from 3.14 million to 2.69 million. The eastern province of Leinster however, grew in this period by 15%, while Munster (in the South) declined by 13.2%, Connaught (in the West) declined by 22.8% and the three counties of Ulster declined by 23.5%.[6] The population of the major metropolis (Dublin and Dun Laoire) grew at an annual rate of 1.1% for the period 1926-51. [7]In the period 1961-1981, the population of this metropolis grew 37.9%; the cities of Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford collectively grew by nearly 40%, and towns with inhabitants of 500 to 1,499 people grew by 27%. Small centres and county districts experienced a decline.[8] In the 1981 census however, 1.3 million people (38% of the population) still lived outside towns and villages with densities between 8 persons per square kilometre and a maximum of 38.[9]

The transitions in population density of rural areas that occurred in the period of our study are apparent from Freeman's report in 1944/45 of densities in 1936. He reported maxima of 160 persons per square kilometre in Dunfanaghy district (Co. Donegal) in that year[10]. In more recent surveys (1981 and 1986) higher densities in rural areas occur in districts where urban spillover effects have been significant in recent decades. A number of former "congested districts" still retain relatively high population densities on the basis of supplementary income from emigrants remittances, tourism and 'farmers dole."[11]

Migration

High outward migration has been the most distinctive feature of Irish demography for almost two centuries.[12] It is apparent from Figure 4.3 that the pattern of population change in Ireland is most strongly influenced by the pattern of migration with growth occurring when out-migration is low or reversed and population decline occurring during periods of high out-migration, as in the period 1946-60. The development of the education system in all its facets took place against the backdrop of this social phenomenon. While child (family) emigration had a direct impact on cohort size, the phenomenon of high emigration has a number of other influences on education processes. In the first instance, emigration as a

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5 Coleman(1992), opcit., p55.
6 Report of Commission on Emigration etc (1954) p284 Table 4.
7 ibid. p284. The source tells us that Glasgow grew by 0.5% during the years 1921-40 and Edinburgh grew by 0.4% 1921-31.
8 Horner, A.A., (1986) p37.
9 ibid. p38. See also Horner, A.A., et al (1987) p19ff and maps 2 and 3.
10 Freeman, T.W. (1944/45) "Emigration and Rural Ireland", Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, 17, p404-422.
11 Horner, A.A. (1986) p40.
12 See Coward (1989) "Irish Population Problems" in Carter, RWG and Parker, A.J. (eds) Ireland: Contemporary Perspectives on Land and it's People, London:Routledge.
See Walsh (1989) p35.

social problem was a matter for which education, and particularly vocational education, could help provide a solution. This line of argument is to be found in the *Report of the Commission on Technical Education (1927)* - the *Report of the Commission on Emigration and other Population Policies* (1954) and more recently in NESC Report No. 90, *The Economic and Social Implications of Emigration (1991)*. Two broad responsibilities for education are identified. The first is the adequate preparation of potential emigrants for the realities that will face them in new settings. This includes the provision of knowledge and skills usable in their destination labour markets, together with a range of attitudinal characteristics derived from their culture of origin.[13] The second responsibility relates to the contribution of vocational education to national wealth creation which, in turn, allows increased employment in Ireland and leads to the stemming of emigration.

Dependency Ratio

Policy decisions around the provision of education services are sensitive to one further demographic characteristic, - dependency ratio[14]. The dependency ratio is calculated on the basis of the percentage of the population in the "dependency" age groups of 0-14 and 65+. Birth rates and survivorship rates are the major factors influencing age dependency. In the period 1926-1981, total births continued to rise, mortality rates declined and out-migration fluctuated significantly. (See Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.1 shows the age structure for the period 1926-1996 by showing the percentage in the dependent age categories at census dates.

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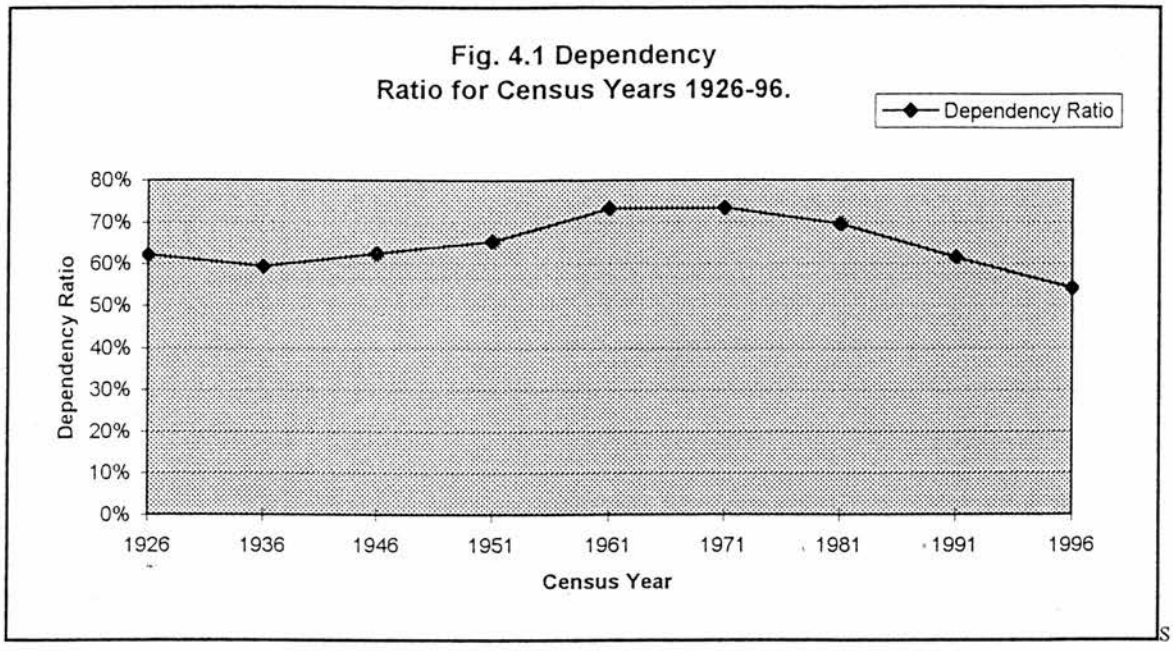
13 See Report of the Commission on Technical Education (1927) p51-53, Commission on Emigration etc., (1954) p176-178, 192-197. NESC Report No. 90 (1991) p156-159.

14 For recent confirmation of this see Department of Education Republic of Ireland (1993) "Presentation to the National Education Forum" 19th October 1993 Dublin Castle. Unpublished mimeograph - Department of Education Press Office.



Source: CSO(1997) Census 96: Principal Demographic Results

Dependency ratios increased from 63% to 73% from 1946 to 1971(due to heavy emigration losses in the active age ranges in the 1950's) and declined to 54% in 1996. Reduced emigration in the period 1970 – 1996 has brought Irish dependency rates closer to contemporary levels in other developed countries.[15] The variation in age dependency is, however, further modified by the effects of economic dependency, the relative numbers who are economically active compared to dependents (unemployed) in the age group 15-64, plus the numbers of those in the dependent age groups.. In contrast to age dependency, economic dependency indicators peaked during the 1980's through a combination of increased labour force entrants (due to increased births in the previous twenty years), and high unemployment. Since 1986, these indicators also, have begun to move downward.[16] This characteristic is further examined in Chapter 7.

The Demographic Data: The Irish Demographic Regime

The demography of the Republic of Ireland in the late twentieth century is quite exceptional by international standards. Figures collated by Coleman (1992) indicate that in contrast to thirty-six industrial counties, Ireland in 1987 reported: the highest natural increase, the highest total fertility rate, the lowest proportion of first births and by far the highest proportion of fourth and higher order births, (almost four times the industrial country average). Ireland was the only country still losing population through out-migration, despite the high level of natural increase, and still had the most youthful population in the

15 See NESC(1996), Strategy into the 21st Century, Dublin: National Social and Economic Council, p33-38.
16 ibid. See also Sexton, J.J. & O'Connell, P.J., (eds.), (1997), Labour Market Studies: Ireland, Brussels: European Commission.

industrial world, with 29 per cent of the population under the age of 15.[17] This current position has its origins in the previous two centuries. "Irelands demographic experience is unique" is the view offered by Mjoset (1992) having examined its population growth and migration experience in comparison to ten other European countries in the period 1840 to 1960.[18]

The first census of 1841 enumerated 8.2 million people in the island of Ireland. O'Grada (1993) adduces evidence that the growth rate in Ireland for the period 1750-1845 was significantly above European norms.[19] In explanation of this, Coleman (1992) opines: -*"The argument that the traditional restraints against early marriage had been eroded by the ease of supporting a family through potato cultivation seems to have stood the test of time."*[20] However, in the long view, the feature that requires explanation may not be the short term increase up to 1840, in the relative growth rate in Ireland, but the failure to sustain population growth in Ireland after 1840. The Commission on Emigration Report (1954) points out that the population density in Ireland was unexceptional in the 1840's.[21] Coleman suggests, succinctly, that *"Ireland failed to go through the agricultural revolution, so important to England's later economic success enabling it to sustain a large population with a growing standard of living."*[22] In contrast, Mjoset, by plotting Ireland's population movements against those for Denmark for the period 1750-1926 shows an "explosion of rural poor"[23] in the period 1780-1840, followed by a dramatic reduction that continued for the subsequent 100 years.[24] This profile is in stark contrast with the smoother growth curve that characterised Denmark and other Nordic countries. Instead of an agricultural revolution, Ireland had famines. The cataclysmic impact of the series of famines during the period 1820 to 1850 imposed a demographic transformation - "a population implosion"[25] the principal feature of which was high emigration. Ireland's population in 1910 was only 54 per cent of the population of the 1840's, while in the case of other European countries, the universal experience was growth

Courtney (1986) has suggested that emigration may be interpreted in either of two ways.[26] Firstly, it may be seen as a short-term safety-valve relieving population pressure and delaying fertility decline. Alternatively, it may be seen, along with mortality (famine) and fertility (birth control), as one of a range of

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17 See Coleman (1992) p55.

18 See Mjoset (1992) p62.

19 See O'Grada (1989) and O'Grada (1993) p41-43.

20 opcit. p59. This line of argument is graphically presented by Crotty (1986) p41ff cited in Mjoset (1992) p202. "The exotic potato thus created in Ireland the agronomic conditions in which a coolie class could subsist by cultivating land without capital, other than a spade and a basket of seed potatoes. The potato made possible in Ireland the existence of a coolie class 20 degrees of latitude further than any coolie class in the world. The Irish coolies provided the cheaplabour on which was built an Irish economy that between 1660 and 1820 grew more rapidly than any other in Europe.

21 See Report of Commission on Emigration etc (1954) p28-29.

22 Coleman opcit. p59.

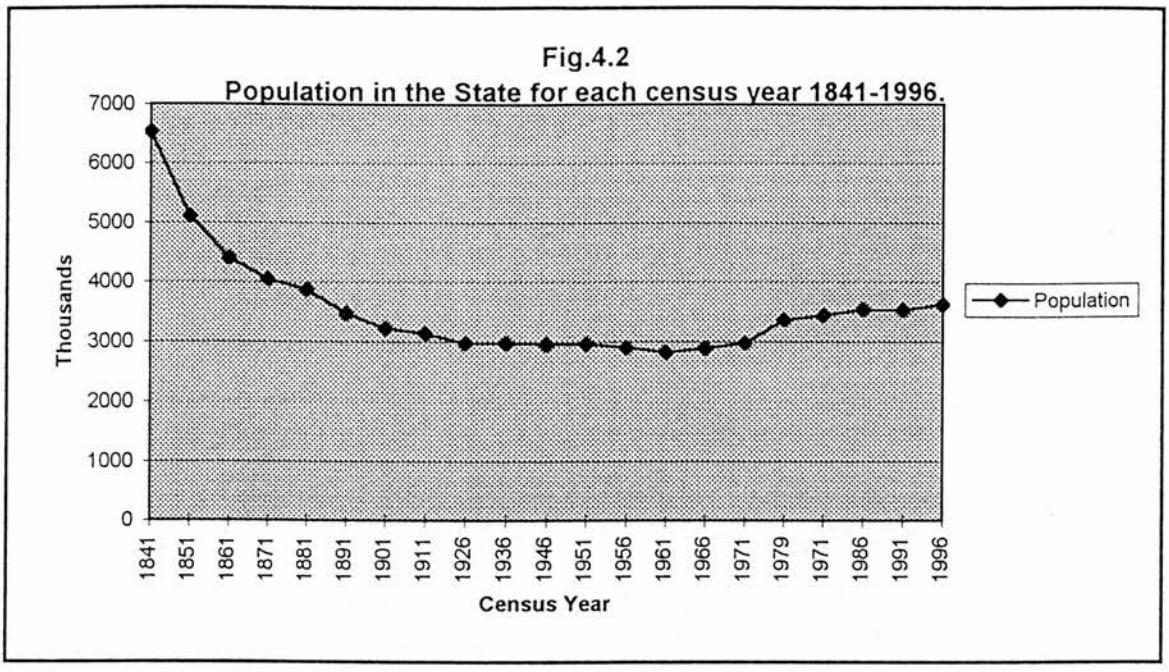
23 Mjoset. opcit. P203.

24 For a discussion of the extent to which population growth 1780-1840 and the effects of famine was unevenly distributed by region and social class, see Cullen (1987) p100-131.

25 Mjoset, opcit. p62.

26 Courntey(1986) p25-26.

responses to the pressures of population growth and relative socio-economic deprivation. Figure 4.2 shows the total population development for the periods 1841-1996

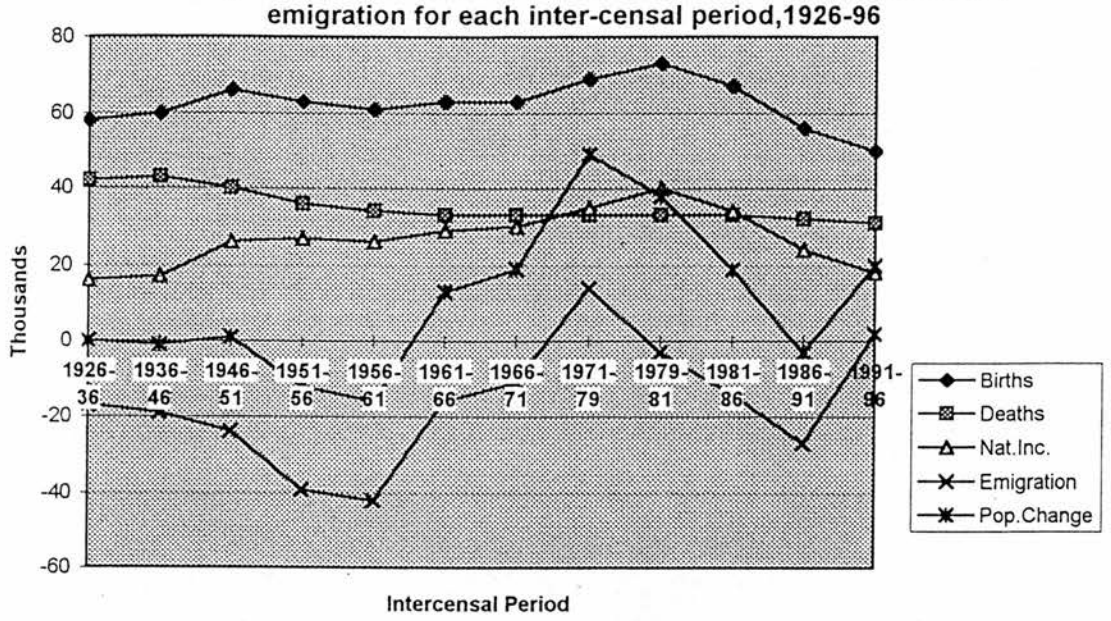


Source: CSO(1997) Census 96: Principal Demographic Results

A summary glance at the key demographic characteristics as presented in Figure 4.3 shows that the most significant contribution to the net increase/decrease of population comes from change in net migration. These general characteristics have been presented in comparative context in Coleman (1992)[27] They are also examined in more detail by disaggregating total fertility, marriage fertility, marriage rates and extra marital fertility.

27 See Coleman(1992) opcit. p59ff. The material presented by Coleman draws heavily on the work of the Princetons group's international demographic project, reported in Coale and Watkins(1986). The Decline of Fertility in Europe, Princeton University Press., which charts the evolution of the European demographic transition at the level of 431 provinces from mid nineteenth century to 1961.

Fig.4.3
Average annual births, deaths, natural increase and estimated net emigration for each inter-censal period,1926-96



Source: CSO(1997) Census 96: Principal Demographic Results

This examination draws attention to the distinctive nature of the Irish fertility profile in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Overall fertility was comparatively low until approximately the 1920's when falling fertility rates in other countries left stable Irish rates appearing high. Marital fertility remained static in the period 1871-1911 when elsewhere it was falling. There were further falls in the proportions of people marrying in the late nineteenth century and an increase in the average age of marriage.[28] Illegitimacy rates remained low and do not appear to have risen until the 1960's.[29]

Coleman suggests that by 1911 differences were discernible (by analysis of 1911 census) in regional patterns of fertility and in fertility among Catholics and Protestants. Urban women tended to marry earlier than rural women but "brought their fertility back in line with that of the traditionally later-marrying rural population."[30] By the 1920's Protestant and Catholic populations of Northern Ireland had also begun to diverge, with the Protestant population returning rates closer to the European norms, though higher than those of the British mainland.

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28 See Fig 1. (a) (b) and (c) in Appendix for figures reproduced from Coleman (1986).

29 See Coleman (1992) opcit. p6 off Report of Commission on Emigration and other Population Policies (1954) reports (p101) the following average rates of illegitimate births per 100 total live births: 1864-70, 2.4; 1871-80, 2.0; 1891-1910, 2.0; 1941-1950, 3.5; 1951-1952, 2.5. Coleman, not unreasonably, suggests that extra-marital births may have suffered particularly from under-registration.

30 Coleman (1992) p61.

The Ideological Thesis

A regular, if unique demographic profile characterised Ireland in the early twentieth century: exceptionally late marriage with low levels of illegitimacy or cohabitation; 'natural' high fertility within marriage with correspondingly relatively high levels of overall fertility compared with other populations which married earlier: Mortality was moderate by contemporary standards. The system was dominated by very high rates of emigration.

Coleman points out that Irish fertility trends have much in common with other Roman Catholic, Southern European countries, all of which started a 'fertility transition' late in comparative terms. This "transition" referred to is derived from the Coale and Watkins(1986) study which indicates that from the 1870's most European countries began to adopt family planning within marriage. As a generalisation, it can be said that Ireland did not - until approximately a hundred years later.[31] European countries had moved away from the pattern of delayed marriages by the late 1930's; this began to happen in Ireland in the 1960's. By 1980 the 'first demographic transition' made way for a 'second demographic transition' characterised by an increase in extramarital births and a 'plurality of family forms'.[32]

The timing of this transition appears to be more in step with other European countries.[33] Ireland's illegitimacy ratio is no longer the lowest in Europe, having overtaken Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Poland. In 1986, there were 37,243 separated persons in Ireland, in proportional terms a larger number than in England.[34] By the first quarter of 1993, 19.6% of all births were births outside marriage.[35] In sum, it is suggested that our period of study, 1930-1990, is characterised by a demographic regime that can be seen as having three discernible phases. The first period concludes in the 1960/70's and is characterised by fertility control by self control; late and low marriage rates, high marriage fertility rates in marriage; low illegitimacy rates and high emigration. In this phase, Ireland's regime was strongly atypical and its origins can be explained primarily in terms of a response to the cataclysmic demographic events of the mid nineteenth century. It's continuance so late into the twentieth century cannot adequately be explained by its origins and are examined briefly below.

The second demographic phase can be equated with what Coleman terms 'the first transition'.[36] Ireland moved towards developed country norms for age at marriage, completed family size and total fertility. The existence of this transition is shielded from view somewhat by the increase in births which was primarily a

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31 See footnote 27 above.
32 Coleman (1992) p69.
33 Douthwaite (1992) suggests that this transition is detected in the U.K. after 1955 - see p121.
34 Coleman p69.
35 In 1992 the annual marriage rate per 1,000 population had reached am estimated all time low of 4.6, from 7.4 in 1971. Department of Health (1993) Vital Statistics No. 516. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
36 ibid. p68.

change in the timing of births rather than an increase in the number of births per woman.[37] The third phase is confined to the final 10 years of the period of study and is characterised by a dramatic growth in extra marital fertility and in the number of non-traditional family units.[38]

To explain the Irish fertility regime and its transitions both ideological and materialist or economic approaches are adopted. Coleman identifies four interrelated factors to explain the Irish demographic transitions: - family planning, women in the workforce, emigration and the influence of the Roman Catholic church. It is to be noted that not just the transitions, but the timing of their occurrence, also needs explanation.[39] For Coleman *"The obvious explanation for the persistent high birth rate of the Irish fertility regime is the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, the pronatalism of its doctrines being translated into demographic consequences by Irish religiosity.and the particular influence of the hierarchy in government policy."*[40]

The report, **The Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems, 1948-1954** provides some evidence on of the operation of Catholic influence at the level of population policy for the period 1930 to the mid 1950's. A state commission,[41] it contained three Roman Catholic clergymen among its twenty-four members. Its terms of reference included the duty to: -

> *...to examine, in particular, the social and economic effects of birth, death, migration and marriage rates at present and their probable course in the near future; to consider what measures, if any, should be taken in the national interest to influence the future trend in population; generally, to consider the desirability of formulating a national population policy.*[42]

The Commission received memoranda of evidence from twenty eight organisations and forty nine individuals. With two possible exceptions, the organisations cannot be deemed to be organisations to further Roman Catholic positions: two of the memoranda came from clergymen and one from the leader of a lay Roman Catholic organisation.[43] In Chapter 3, 'Births, Fertility and Family Size', a clear comprehensive picture of the fertility regime was presented and compared with a wide range of other countries. The total fertility rate was acknowledged to be 22 per cent greater than in Northern Ireland, 80 per cent higher than in Scotland and 2.25 times as great as England and Wales, and regional and social group differentials were presented.[44]

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37 ibid. p64.

38 See Kelly, E. (1974) The Permissive Society in Ireland? Cork: Mercier, for a contemporary statement.

39 Coleman opcit. p72-77.

40 ibid. p75.

41 Established by William Norton, T.D., Minister for Social Welfare on April 5th, 1948. See Report of Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems 1948-1954. (1954) pxi.

42 Report of the Commission on Emigration (1954) p1.

43 ibid. Appendix I p258ff. One of the clergymen was a parish priest in Southampton:The layman was Mr.Frank Duff, a leader of the Legion of Mary, an influential lay Roman Catholic organisation.

However, when in Chapter 9 it came to presenting the Commissions views on 'Population Policy' what emerged was a clear statement of Roman Catholic thinking on the family and reproduction.[45]

> *The family is the basis of human society, the source on which all other forms of society depend for their members. We cannot, therefore, subscribe to the view that the state and nation are our most important social institutions, that loyalty and service to these should come before loyalty and service to our family, and that population level, marriage rate, size of family and the like should be such as the best interests of the state and nation require.....(p179)*

> *Marriage is a free contract.....the right to enter into this contract, that is to marry and raise a family, is a primary natural human need, antecedent and superior to all positive law....."(p179)*
> *"The primary purpose of marriage, in the natural order of things, is the birth and bringing up of children. The principle which rightly guides the normal Christian married couple in this matter is to have as many children as they can reasonably hope to bring up properly, assuming the practice of Christian virtues in their lives and the readiness to make certain sacrifices. Married couples may, of course, "plan" or "space" or "limit" or "control" their family, that is, may decide the number of children they want and when they will have them, if their decisions are based on morally good motives and their actions and methods of control do not violate the moral precepts of the natural law. But today these words, and such terms as "family planning", "family spacing", "family limitation", and "family control" are frequently and widely used to mean arranging to have a small family of one or two children, or indeed no family at all, either for selfish or purely materialistic motives which are morally indefensible, or by the use of contraceptives or artificial means, or by other methods which are contrary to the natural law. (p.180)*

Not withstanding this strong Roman Catholic position, Bishop Lucey of Cork (a member of the Commission) felt it necessary to enter a Minority Report in his own name, in the course of which he asserted:

> *The use - and so the manufacture and sale - of contraceptives must be regarded as in all circumstances against the Moral Law. It is wrong for married persons as it is for those not married at all to abuse their faculties, that is, to use them in such a way as to prevent their full natural effects. Those who argue for birth control on the score that it will mean a better start in life for the fewer children miss the point that the end does not justify the means...*

> *The Christian precept is that income should be adjusted to meet the size of the population and not vice versa"*[46]

A dissonant note was struck by commission member, A.A. Luce, a 'Minister of the Christian Church' (and a Trinity don) who asserted that in response to the fertility regime outlined in the report *"The right inference is that the Quiverful families of Victorian days are not, in general, possible or desirable today."* He went on to dissociate himself from *"..the unqualified and unargued condemnation of contraceptives"* and to complain that the Commission was unwilling to prepare and consider information on the subject of

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44 ibid. p89-102.
45 ibid. pp179-189.
46 ibid. p357.

contraceptives. He considered it *"...an unpleasant public duty to get what information he could on the subject."* He concluded: *"On the evidence available it seems to me probable that this taboo is a contributing cause of late ages at marriage and other disturbing features of our marriage pattern."*[47]

This internal evidence presented above from the 1954 Commission Report tend to confirm the hegemony of Roman Catholic policy positions in the period.[48] Lee(1973) suggests that the Church, *'...merely reflected the dominant economic values of post-famine rural society'.*[49] *'Few societies anywhere'*, he argues, *'rural or urban, Christian or Confucian, refined the marriage bargain to such an acquisitive nicety.'*[50] In Lee's view, clergymen played useful roles as 'psychological safety valves', who *'dutifully sanctified this mercenary ethos, but were in any case powerless to challenge the primacy of economic man over the countryside'.*[51] The legislation under which contraceptives were "banned" were the Censorship of Publications Act, 1929 and the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1935.[52]

Notwithstanding the legal position, significant behavioural change in sexual matters was underway by the 1970's. These changes can be tracked also in the legal sequence of events from the McGee High Court case in 1973, through the 1979 Health (Family Planning) Act, the 1985 Health (Family Planning) Amendment Act to the 1993 Family Planning Act. They can be tracked also, in legislation that abolished the status of illegitimacy in 1992 and that provided for the revision of the legal status of spouses as property owners, in 1993.[53] That these changes encountering significant resistance is evident in the affirmation of traditional Catholic positions, on abortion in 1983 and divorce in 1986. The extent of change is evident in the removal of a constitutional ban on divorce in 1995 and on information on abortion in 1993.

Education and Demographic Transition

> *What"*, asks Coleman . *".. are the ultimate factors which have changed attitudes towards desired family size and the acceptability, or necessity, of family planning?*[54]

His answers include the economic and the ideological. Children generate increased costs because of the need to educate them to meet the needs of a skilled workforce; prolonged education also means delaying the time when children can earn money. Movement away from rural small holdings and the entry of more married women into the paid workforce, also shift the relative cost of children in the family. Of more pertinence to us is the suggestion that higher educational standards, especially among women, helped to

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47 Ibid. Reservation No. 6. P230-231.

48 'Hegemony' is used here to mean: "moral and philosophical leadership which is attained through the active consent of major groups in a society." See Bocock (1986) p11.

49 Lee, J.(1973) The Modernisation of Irish Society: 1848-1918. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan. P5.

50 ibid.

51 ibid. p5 & 6.

52 See McMahon, B. (1982) "The Law Relating to Contraception in Ireland" in Clarke, D.M. Morality and the Law, Cork: Mercier p20-30.

53 See Powell, F.W. (1992) The Politics of Irish Social Policy 1600-1900, Lewiston N.Y.: The Edwin Meller Press, p312-315.

erode traditional and religious attitudes and facilitated the spread of knowledge of family planning methods.[55] Addressing the same questions, Psacharopholous and Woodhall (1985: 304) present findings from World Bank studies in a large number of countries with the evidence supporting a relationship between education and fertility. They summarise the evidence as supporting a "strong but complex set of relationships between parental education, children's education and fertility." The following propositions are presented on the basis of the evidence:

- *Education cannot be expected to reduce fertility in all circumstances. In particular, in the poorest and least literate societies, small amounts of education may actually lead to higher fertility initially. There is tentative evidence that over time, education will ultimately reduce fertility.*
- *Increasing female education will be more likely to reduce fertility than increasing male education.*
- *Education is more likely to reduce fertility in urban than rural areas (p.299-300)*
- *Investment in education may change attitudes and perceptions and thus reduce fertility in at least <u>five</u> ways:*
- 1. *The childs potential for work inside and outside the family may be reduced (that is the indirect cost to the family may be increased)*
  2. *Direct costs of education (for example, fees, books, uniforms and so on) may be increased.*
  3. *Rather than being regarded as a present productive resource within the family the child may be regarded as a future productive resource by society and the family: this change is often accompanied by laws to protect children, such as child labor laws and compulsory schooling legislation.*
  4. *Mass education may accelerate cultural change and the creation of new cultural values.*
  5. *Schools serve as a major instrument for propagating new ideas* and *values."*[56]

Compulsory schooling to age fourteen was introduced in the Irish Free state in 1926. By 1964, ninety - nine percent of thirteen year olds, and sixty-six percent of fourteen year olds were enrolled in the various segments of the school system. The role of churches in all segments of the system makes it impossible to argue that these institutions were the source of any ideas about family planning that ran counter the traditional religious led views. It will be necessary to look beyond schools, (to the advent of television in 1962) for a possible vehicle for such ideas. It may be reasonable to argue that the general effect of increased participation in second level education include a development of personal autonomy on the part of individuals which, irrespective of the actual religious tradition in which it occurs, promotes the development of the exercise of autonomous moral judgement. It may be argued that while church run schools might wish to balance the weight of conscience with the authority of tradition, the deep-seated ideals of the classical grammar-school education cultivated the critical and independent mind. A particular role for the vocational school system in this context is not amenable to argument for lack of pertinent evidence.

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54 Coleman(1992) opcit. p73.
55 ibid. p72 ff.

Demography and Vocational Education 1930-1990

The demographic characteristic most frequently asociated with educational policy decisions is cohort size. Fluctuations in cohort size lead to changes in in demand for schooling facilities, personnel and resources. The data presented above (Fig.4.3) indicate birthrate fluctuations in the years 1946-51 and again in 1966-1996.

On the basis that education provision is made for the "arriving" age group, the age group 10-14 years has been taken as the cohort group against which to examine the response of the Vocational Education system to birth rate change. Table 4.1 presents the development of the system for the years 1926-86 in terms of schools/centres, total enrolments, and teachers in the system.

Table 4.1

Demographic Change: Vocational Education Provision 1926-1986

Year	Aged 10-14	Permanent V.E. Schools	Non-Permanent V.E. Centres	Total Enrolments	Teachers	
					Whole-time	Part-time
1926	295,533	67	1,248	63,753	n.a	n.a.
1936	282,783	183	695	64,878	777	644
1946	262,328	192	592	74,635	1,055	826
1951	260,900	205	n.a	85,860	1,193	1,004
1956	276,600	260	537	88,624	1,487	1,119
1961	288,800	294	433	92,077	1,661	1,500
1966	285,500	327	419	100,635	2,445	2,276
1971	298,600	275 (a)	-	144,372 (a)	4,476 (a)	2,978 (a)
1976	322,800	275	-	184,411	5,532	*671 - w.te.*
1981	341,200	262 (b)	-	208,503 (b)	6,475 (b)	*1,069 (b) - w.te.*
1986	350,100	267 (c)	-	208,848 (c)	6,959 (c)	*1,339 (c) - w.te.*

Sources: CSO., Investment in Education, Dept. of Education Reports.

(a) 1972/73 includes 7 RTC's (Regional Technical Colleges)
(b) 1980/81 includes 8 RTC's
(c) 1985/86
* w.t.e = whole time equivalents.

The figures above show the early move away from non-permanent school buildings to permanent schools in the period 1930 to 1950, a significant expansion of 193 schools in the period 1926-56; and a further 67

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56 Psacharopoulos, G. & Woodhall, M, Education for Development: An Analysis of Investment Choices, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p295ff.

up to 1966. The number of vocational schools has dropped to 267 in 1985/86. The figures on enrolments require to be disaggregated to show wholetime student numbers as opposed to part-time. Disaggregated figures showing whole-time enrolments in continuation and technical courses as a proportion of the 14-19 year old age cohort on the census year are presented in Table 4.2 and Fig. 4.4.

Table 4.2

VEC Provision as a Demographic Ratio

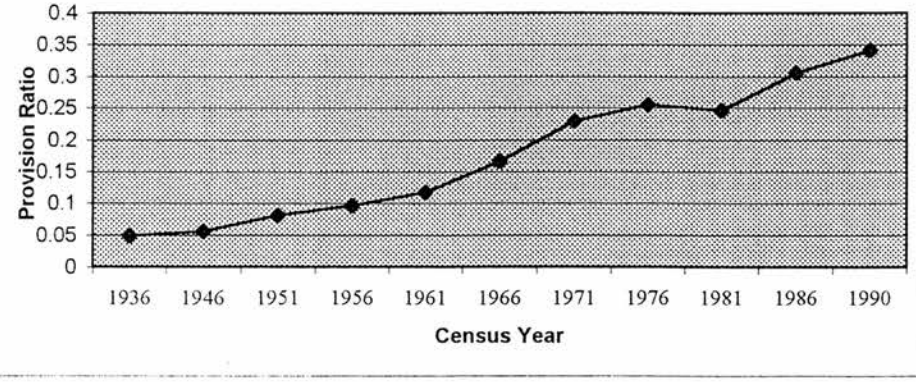
Year	Cohort	W.T. Cont.	W.T. Technical	Provision Ratio (b+c)/a
1926	286,187		n.a.	
1936	268,326	13,200		0.049
1946	251,487	14,170		0.056
1951	241,182	19,011	526	0.081
1956	232,100	21,786	705	0.096
1961	233,800	27,124	1,201	0.117
1966	259,400	38,467	4,572	0.166
1971	267,700	57,452	3,921 (a)(b)	0.229
1976	298,700	69,404	6,836 (b)	0.255
1981	326,400	69,501©	10,901 (b)©	0.246
1986	331,100	82,404 (d)	18,953 (b)(d)	0.306
1991	335,026	87,005 (e)	27,271 (e)	0.341

Sources: CSO and Dept. of Education Reports

Note: Cohort is 15-19 age cohort for relevant Census Year
Figures for '1936' are for school year 1936/37

(a) Figures for 1972/73
(b) Third level
(c) Figures for 1980/81
(d) Figures for 1985/86
(e) Figures for 1990/91

Fig. 4.4
VEC 'Provision Ratio for Census Years, 1936-1990.



A 'provision ratio' is devised to expose the trend in vocational education provision in the context of cohort size. As the wholetime provision ratio continued to rise by approximately 100% in each twenty year period, it is obvious that the increased provision was not driven primarily by demographic factors. On the contrary, this data suggests that the cohort size is not the key factor driving development of the VEC sector in its wholetime provision.. There is little correlation to be seen between the fluctuations in cohort size (as revealed in birth rates) and the patterns of provision development evident in Figure 4.4.

More detailed data on the development of VEC provision is presented in Chapter 7. In Chapter 7 also, some consideration of the interplay of emigration and the provision of VEC schools and courses is presented.

Summary

The chapter has explored in a preliminary way, the demographic context in which vocational education was established and developed in the period 1930-1990. The uniqueness of the Irish demographic experience has been emphasised. The dominant influence on the rate of change in the Irish population has always been migration, rather than the fluctuations in the birth rate. However, these fluctuations and their effects on cohort size are the key demographic parameter for the education system. The role of education system in fertility change is looked at briefly. Three demographic regimes have been identified: the first to approximately 1970, when a transition from high to more moderate, and characteristically modern, fertility rates commenced: the third phase is currently underway, with rising plurality of marriage forms and rising extra marital fertility. The linkages between these demographic characteristics and the education system have been sketchily examined. Finally, some data on the development of the vocational education system has been presented.

CHAPTER 5

ECONOMIC POLICY 1922-1990 – AN OVERVIEW

Introduction

This Chapter will present the economic policy of the period 1922-1990, as a background to the establishment and development of the VEC system. The development of economic policy in independent Ireland can be seen as having five phases, characterised by the broad approach adapted to its economic condition as a "small open economy." **Phase 1, 1922-32**, when the relationship with the British economy was accepted and development for the newly independent state was sought within that framework: **Phase 2, 1932-1939**, when more nationalist economic policy attempted to end the dependence on British trade and to develop an independent economy, in an independent state. **Phase 3, 1939-1958** was a reluctant return to the earlier acceptance of the "dominant feature" of major dependence on British markets. The period **1958-73** initiated a **Phase 4**, in which government strove to integrate the Irish economy with the larger European and world economy and so to develop growth. The **current phase** starts with the **1973** oil crisis and continues to **1990** - and beyond. It is characterised by the efforts to respond to the difficulties for growth created by the state of the European and global economy.[1] The section characterises the Irish economy as a *'small open economy'*. The population was little more than one percent of the twelve member EC in 1988 and it accounted for no more than 0.78 percent of total GDP of the twelve in that year.[2] The 'openness' of the Irish economy delimited the scope for policy intervention and narrowed the range of policy instruments available to Irish governments in attempting to manage the economy. We turn now to outline briefly the characteristics of the policy phases identified above.

Phase I:1922-1932

This phase starts with the establishment of the independent state under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1921, and ends with the accession to power of Eamonn de Valera, and the Fianna Fail Party. During this period, there were elections in 1922 and 1923, two elections in 1927, and an election in 1932. In these elections, those groups which supported the Treaty won control of the government of the new state on each occasion until 1932. Those who opposed the Treaty, led by de Valera, initially refused to sit in

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1 These period characterisations are drawn from Haughton (1991) p 44-48. Variations on these are offered in other studies - e.g. Kennedy et al, (1988)

Parliament, (known as the Dail), and a bitter civil war was fought from the summer of 1922 until April 1923, when it ended in victory for the Government forces. The main government party was known as 'Cumann na nGael' (The Irish Party) and held all government posts for the period 1922-1932. The opponents of the Treaty formed into a party (Fianna Fail-The Soldiers of Ireland) which contested the first 1927 election, in which they won almost as many seats as the Government party. The second election in 1927 was called under terms which forced Fianna Fail to take their seats or forfeit them. In the election of 1932 Fianna Fail had sufficient seats to take over government with the support of the Labour party. It was in this phase that the Vocational Education system was planned, negotiated and enacted. The economic policy and the economic pressures of this period were the contexts for the establishment of the system whose characteristics as enacted have altered only minimally.

The characteristics of the opening decade of Government policy are dominated by the need to establish the new state and much of financial policy was driven by the felt need to establish or retain international and domestic confidence in the financial management of the state.[3] Daly (1992) p.14 suggests that *"The Cumann na nGael government that took office in January 1923 was without any policy save to ensure the survival of the state."* Arthur Griffith, the leader of Sinn Fein and President of the Executive Council (Government) until his death in August 1923, had argued that one of the main benefits of independence would be that control of economic policy would allow a native Government to protect its fledgling industries with tariffs.[4] Late nineteenth and early twentieth century economic analysis by Irish nationalists, had claimed that the industrial decline of the nineteenth century was due to the preferential treatment given to the interests of the mainland British economy under the Act of Union, 1800. In the words of George O'Brien, Professor of Economics at University College, Dublin in the early years of the state and the mentor of many Ministers in the early Governments:

> *The industrial decay of Ireland was caused therefore, by no failing of character either on the part of the employer or of the workers, but was the result of the fiscal changes which were introduced at the Union and completed twenty years later.*[5]

This form of 'economic nationalism' formed a major strand of policy thinking in economic matters up to the 1950's. If very close linkages with the British economy were a major feature of the economy of Ireland in 1900, the dominant place of agriculture in the economy was another major feature. A series of land acts from 1881 to 1903 had transferred ownership from landlords to those who were formerly peasant tenants.

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2 Nolan & Nolan (1991) p226.
3 Daly, M.E. (1992), p31.
4 Haughton, opcit.p31. & Daly, opcit.p5.
5 Quoted in Daly, opcit.p5. For the influence of O'Brien on Irish economic policy, see Lee, J. (1989). p112-117.

By 1917 almost two-thirds of the tenants had acquired their holding.[6] This "repossession" of the land by the 'native', catholic and nationalist Irish, was the prelude to political independence. It was to be expected then that the economic priorities of the agricultural community would dominate among the new government. Houghton (1991: 31) gives the period 1921-32 the title "Agriculture First" and quotes the Minister for Agriculture, Patrick Hogan as outlining a general policy of, *'helping the farmer who helped himself and letting the rest go to the devil.'*

The basic analysis has been formulated thus:

> *...agriculture was, and would remain, by far the most important industry in the Free State, and the touchstone by which every economic measure must be judged was its effects on the prosperity of the farmers... everything that raised their income raised the national income of the country. Prosperity among farmers would provide the purchasing power necessary to sustain demand for new agricultural goods and services ... the only thing the government could do to help the farmer was to assist him to reduce his costs of production.*[7]

This analysis ignored the interests of those whose wage labour was part of the farmers' costs: it also provided supportive argumentation for those who advocated a 'free trade' regime as opposed to the protection of tariffs. Free trade would keep the costs of farming inputs down. Those who wished to develop indigenous industry would have preferred not to have the competition of U.K. imports. But their lobby within government and within the administration was weak especially until 1927, when 'economic nationalism' began to move into the ascendant, a process that culminated in the period 1932-39.[8] The preference for agricultural development and the need to keep farm costs down was also translated into support for a very tight fiscal policy, with low taxes, low government spending and balanced budgets. That these were highly valued has been attributed in significant measure, by most historians, to the British civil service background and training of the senior civil servants who provided the flow of advice to the former revolutionaries who were now inexperienced ministers.[9] As Lee (1989: 109) puts it *'Fiscal responsibility, and low taxation, were supposed to impress English doubters of the Irish capacity for self-discipline'.* Kevin O'Higgins, Minister for Home Affairs in this government, described his cabinet colleagues as *"probably the most conservative minded revolutionaries that ever put through a successful revolution."*[10] This combination of a conservative cabinet and an orthodox civil service produced reductions in social

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6 Houghton, (1991), p25. Hoppen (1989) has a section entitled 'Agricola Victor' describing changes in Irish society from the Famine to 1921, See pp83-109.

7 O'Brien, G. (1936) 'Patrick Hogan' in Studies, September 1936,p358, quoted in Lee, (1989), p112-113.

8 The Department of Finance, under its Secretary, Joseph Brennan, was the guardian of economic orthodoxy. The Department of Industry and Commerce was anxious to explore less orthodox options. See Girvin (1989), esp Ch.1, 2, & 3, p1-87, and Daly (1922) and Lee (1989), p122ff.

9 See Lee, opcit.p106. Daly (1992) points out that *'the broad sweep of economic policy was determined not by government but by commissions of experts: The Commission on Agriculture (1924), The Fiscal Enquiry Committee, (1923) and The Banking Commission, (1927).*

10 ibid, p105.

service expenditure each year from 1923 to 1930.[11] Few houses were built, pensions for the old and blind were actually reduced and emigration averaged 33,000 per annum for the years 1921-31.[12] Kennedy is of the view: - *"in practice, the government was stronger in its determination to avoid placing burdens on agriculture than in undertaking active measures."*[13]

Two other general aspects of policy in this period are worthy of reference. Firstly, the banking system and the link with sterling was left untouched. No attempt was made by the new government to exercise control over capital assets and the banking system. Lee (1989), claims that because Ireland inherited a banking system *"modelled on the British joint stock banking rather than the European investment banking system....the free State would expend much time and ingenuity in trying to invent substitutes for investment banks."*[14] The 1927 Currency Act established a new Irish currency, with a Free State pound valued at parity with sterling, and backed with sterling assets. This decision followed the advice of the Banking Commission (1926) though it ran counter to the advice of the Department of Industry and Commerce. The Bank of Ireland continued to be bankers for the Government, assets were held in London, and no Central Bank was established until 1942.[15] This is interpreted as a further signal of the "triumph of continuity" between the economic interests of pre-Revolutionary Ireland and the new Free State.[16] The caution and conservatism of the dominant 'Treasury View' was contested by the more developmental view of the staff of the Department of Industry and Commerce who saw a major deficiency in the structures to harness investment capital:A Trade Loans (Guarantee) Act in 1924 and a non state body, - the Industrial Trust Company-established on the advice of the 1926 Banking Commission, were both singularly unsuccessful in securing industrial development capital even when savings were adequate.[17] The structure of taxation, it is suggested, tended to attract 'rentier' rather than risk capital.[18]

One venture, however, did run counter to existing trends in respect of Government intervention in the economy and general fiscal policy. The Shannon hydroelectric scheme was initiated in 1925 and the new Electricity Supply Board, established in 1927, as a major state investment. Fanning suggests that the *"glowing political attractions of the scheme - a chance to bring light to the dark places, to replace darkness with brightness, to economise time and labour, to increase production - generated sufficient political will among ministers to overcome civil service inertia."*[19] This inertia ought not be confused with

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11 ibid, p125.
12 Pensions were reduced from ten to nine shillings per week. Fanning, (1983), p63, and Kennedy et al (1988), p38.
13 Kennedy et al (1988), p37. This assessment does not give due weight to the many initiatives designed to improve the quality of agricultural exports. See Daly (1992) p31-36.
14 Lee, opcit. p89.
15 Daly, opcit., p18.
16 ibid, Ch.2.
17 See Daly, p51-3. Lee cites bank deposits of one hundred and ten million pounds in 1927, compared with advances of only sixty million.
18 Lee, p127.
19 Fanning (1983), p78.

sloth: it appears to have arisen more from the strongly held ideas of those recruited to the new state's administrative system. As suggested above, a significant feature of the administrative system in these years is the dominance of the Department of Finance or 'Treasury' view. The Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924 required all government expenditure to have explicit finance approval.[20] Joseph Brennan, secretary to the Department of Finance 1923-27, was one of over twenty thousand civil servants (more than 98 percent of the civil service of the new state) who were transferred from the service of the U.K. government on April 1, 1922. It is suggested by Fanning that finance officials *"made their mark upon the Irish Free State less by what they did than by what they prevented others from doing."*[21] Secretary Brennan's view of the transfer of power was as follows:

> *The passing of the state service into the control of a native government, however revolutionary it may have been as a step in the political development of the nation, entailed, broadly speaking, no immediate disturbance of any fundamental kind in the daily work of the average civil servant. Under changed masters the same main tasks of administration continued to be performed by the same staffs on the same general lines of organisation and procedure.*[22]

But from 1927 dissatisfaction was evident: adverse terms of trade for agriculture undid the best efforts of the agricultural sector to increase earnings: unemployment and emigration continued to rise. The view of government ministers' ... *'that it is no function of government to provide work for anybody. They can try and develop tendencies, and can try and set the pace a bit, but it is not the function of the government to provide work'*, was under attack from a vociferous parliamentary opposition, Fianna Fail. That party argued:

> *that Ireland could support a substantially higher population by abandoning international living standards and by defying conventional economic maxims. It favored self-sufficiency, exploitation of native resources, and increased government intervention to be funded through administrative economies and through an end to the payment of land annuities to the British Exchequer.*[23]

In 1932 they had the support of the Labour Party to form a government. Before the year was over, a second election had given them an overall majority in their own right. By then the Vocational Education Act had been passed and the first steps to its implementation had been taken.

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20 See Lee, p105-106 and Fanning, (1983), p63-65.

21 Fanning, p62.

22 Quoted in Fanning, p61.

23 The Government Minister was Patrick McGilligan, Minister for Industry and Commerce, 1924-32. Both quotations are from Daly (1992), p38.

Phase II:1932-39 'Protectionism and the Economic War'

The international economic slump of the late twenties and early thirties put the free trade policies of the Cumann na nGael government under pressure. Fianna Fail came to power with an ideological commitment to greater economic self-sufficiency and to eliminating an economic dependence on Britain.[24] The failure of free trade policies to stem emigration, and to counter the falling value of agricultural output, meant that the alternative policy options were deemed to be attractive. Daly (1992) recounts the efforts of Department of Industry and Commerce personnel to gain support for a policy of indigenous industrial development using tariffs.[25] Sean Lemass, the new Minister for Industry and Commerce, was the major driving force behind the change of policy. In a line of argument that replaces "agriculture" with "industry", Lemass echoes the analysis of Hogan. (See above p97).

> *The limits of a possible industrial revival coincide with country's capacity to consume goods produced. This capacity would increase with the volume of employment available. If we find therefore that within the limits of the market available at home we can provide employment for a greater number than the number now seeking work then we can reasonably hope for a continuous development for a long time to come.*[26]

John Maynard Keynes, lecturing at University College Dublin in April 1933, indicated .. *".I find much to attract me in the economic outlook of your present government towards self-sufficiency."* The economic recession had forced many economies to *"minimise... economic entanglement between nations..."* by the introduction of tariffs.[27] But tariffs in Ireland (at 45 percent average in 1936) were twice as high as those in the U.K. In 1931, 68 items had an import duty imposed; in 1936 the number was 1,947.[28] Self-sufficiency was also pursued by a range of other instruments. Introducing price supports and export bounties for agricultural produce; the establishment of a state Industrial Credit Corporation in 1933 to lend to industry, and a Trade Loans Guarantee (Amendment) Act 1933 which provided state assistance to commercial industrial loans, a Control of Manufacturers Act 1932 fostered majority Irish ownership of industry.[29] The Electricity Supply Board was joined by other state (semi-state) companies: the Sugar Company in 1933, (making sugar from beet for the home market) a Turf Development Board (1934) to exploit the use of Irish bogs as a replacement fuel for coal. A state insurance company was established in 1939 and a state chemicals company in 1934. A Housing Act injected money into housing and was in effect a public works scheme.[30]

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24 See Houghton (1991), p33; Douthwaite, (1992) Ch.14, p249-83.
25 Daly, opcit., p54.
26 Quoted in Girvin, (1989), p90-91.
27 Quoted in Houghton, opcit., p33. The text of Keynes' lecture, *'National Self-Sufficiency'*, was published in Studies, Vol.XXII, June, 1933, p177-193.
28 ibid. See also Kennedy et al opcit., p40.
29 For the operation of this legislation see Daly, opcit, p75ff.

These initiatives meant a significant rise in the share of government spending of the national income, contrary to the treasury view of Department of Finance officials with their minimalist approach to government expenditure and intervention in the economy. Control of Prices Acts in 1932 and 1937 setting up a Prices Commission were additional interventions.[31] This broad range of interventions was carried out in the context of an international recession which, for the first time since the famine, restricted access to the traditional markets for excess Irish labour.[32] They were also carried out in the context of a major economic dispute between the government of the Irish Free State and that of the United Kingdom, which lasted from 1932 to 1939 and is referred to as "The Economic War." Cumann na nGael governments had recognised a duty, agreed as part of the Anglo-Irish Treaty package in 1921, to pay land annuities to Britain to cover the cost of money lent under the various pre-independence land acts.[33] These came to about £5 million annually or about 20 percent of government spending and almost 4 percent of GNP.[34]

The Irish government advanced a range of legal, technical and moral arguments to support the claim that the annuities belonged to the Irish exchequer.[35] This line of argument was very appealing, nationalistically.[36] The amount due in July 1932 was withheld by de Valera, the Irish Taoiseach, or Prime Minister, on July 1st. Immediately, a 20 percent duty was imposed by the British government on agricultural imports from Ireland. These duties were further raised and quotas imposed, as the British authorities collected the monies due. Retaliatory duties were imposed on U.K. sourced imports into Ireland. The barriers between the economies went higher and higher.[37]

'The course of the Irish economy in the 1930's was dominated by three factors - the Economic War, the protectionist policy and the impact of the Great Depression. It would be difficult to distinguish the separate effects of these factors, nor would it be altogether appropriate to do so given that they were to some degree interdependent' [38] Exports declined by almost 30 percent between 1931 and 1933. Farm incomes fell dramatically with British markets unavailable and the terms of trade disimproved. Prices for 1932-39 were less than half the average of the preceding seven years. However, industrial output increased, by 40 percent between 1931 and 1936. Industrial employment increased with it, from 110,600 in 1931 to 166,100 in 1938, an average growth of 6 percen t. The general population remained stable, and emigration declined to virtually zero in 1931 and 1932, when access to the U.S. was severely restricted.[39] But productivity did

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30 Kennedy et al,opcit.,p44.
31 See Haughton, opcit., p34 and Daly, opcit., p118-120.
32 Kennedy et al, opcit., p39.
33 The level of annuities payments was agreed in 1926. See Lee, (1989), p110.
34 ibid. Also, Haughton, (1991), p34.
35 Kennedy et al,opcit., p41.
36 Douthwaite (1992) p265 suggests that this policy *"...rallied the people behind the government and motivated them to do within months things that without its stimulus, they would have done much later if at all."*
37 Details re the above from Kennedy et al, opcit, p42-43.
38 ibid, p44.
39 Houghton, opcit. p35 and Kennedy et al, opcit., p38, 45.

not improve: protective barriers and monopolies in the home markets for Irish owned industry reduced the pressures for internal efficiency. Unemployment grew, *"almost quintupling between 1931 and 1934...to about 14 percent of the labour force in 1935"* by which time emigration resumed. Emigration to the U.S. did not resume in the some proportions as in pre-Depression years. Britain was the preferred destination in the years 1934-1937, until the looming war stemmed the flow, for a period. The adverse effects of the Economic War forced a partial settlement in the 1935 Cattle/Coal pacts, under which Irish cattle were allowed into the U.K. without penal tariffs, in return for the removal of tariffs on British coal. This pact was renewed each year up to 1937. The Anglo Irish Trade Agreement in 1938 brought the episode to an end. Ireland paid one settlement sum of £10 million to conclude the dispute about annuities and undertook to abolish duties on a range of U.K. products. The U.K. agreed to remove many special duties and to return to Ireland 'Commonwealth preferential duties'.[40]

Kennedy et al (1988) offer the following assessment:

> *From the Irish viewpoint, the policy of self-sufficiency had been implemented about as far as it could sensibly go...Moreover, the failure to achieve any substantial redirection of trade had underlined the essential dependence on the British market.*[41]

According to Lee, the agreement marked the end of de Valera's dreams of self-sufficiency with a realisation by him that they could not survive the reality of Anglo-Irish economic relations.[42] Lemass was now saying:

> *It was never conceived as possible that the state could be made completely independent of foreign trade or locked in a water-tight compartment cut off from the current of international life'*[43]

A range of views on the relative success of the 'self-sufficiency' phase of economic policy have been advanced. Two general observations may be drawn from these discussions. Firstly, protectionism and economic nationalism were features of the world economy at this time and the Economic War' over annuities was an accentuating factor for Ireland. Secondly, import substitution was changing the nature of the country's foreign dependence, rather than removing it. 'Materials for further production' became a significantly larger category of imports. As Kennedy et al, observe, 'In some respects this made the country even more dependent on the international market since now employment, as well as consumption, depended on being able to import'.[44]

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40 ibid. In addition to the economic elements of the agreement, Britain ceded control of a number of seaports, which it had retained under the terms of the 1921 treaty.

41 P49.

42 Lee (1989), opcit. p215.

43 From the newspaper, The Irish Press, 22/4/1938, quoted by Lee (1989), p217.

44 Kennedy et al, opcit. p45-46. See also Lee, p233 and NESC (1992), p305.

The onset of World War Two made imports very problematic. A return to free trade was not easy.
The economic policy context outlined above was the milieu for the first years of the VEC system. In this context its development is to be understood. The questions we attempt to answer later relate the nature of the impact this economic milieu had on the developing system.

Phase III: 1939-1958 - The Long Transition

In 1928, de Valera had lamented

> *We will, unfortunately, not be able to cut ourselves completely off (from the world economy)...If by any chance we were cut off I am satisfied that we could now, in this country maintain a population two or three times the size of our present population.*[45]

The World War, in effect, cut off Ireland in 1939. By then, even de Valera realised that his 1928 view required modification. Lemass was saying '...industries had passed beyond the infancy stage and were capable of facing comparison with industries in other countries, and they would have to be prepared to face that comparison'.[46] Girvin has persuasively argued that what was now sought was not so much an abandonment of the self-sufficiency policy but a form of self-sufficient economic development which also had the merit of being efficient.[47] The isolation of neutrality was a pressure to produce as much as possible at home. A shortage of externally supplied fuel, fertilisers and foodstuff constrained agricultural output. The need to compensate for non available imports meant an increase in tillage, which while more labour intensive also was more debilitating for the land quality. Import difficulties also meant a major reduction (25 percent) in manufacturing output. To counteract these problems, a state shipping line was established in 1941. Emigration was not available in the first years of the war and domestic unemployment rose. However, emigration became a deluge by 1942 with 46,000 people estimated to have emigrated, the highest number since the foundation of the state.[48] These went mostly to serve in the British forces, or work in the British war effort.

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45 Quoted in Lee, opcit., and p232.
46 Quoted in Girvin (1989) p132.
47 ibid, p143.

The 'self-sufficiency ideal of the previous eight years had left the economy in a less exposed position than it might otherwise have been and understandably the war experience reinforced support for that broad approach.[49] It also provided the opportunity and justification for more state intervention in economic matters. Lemass saw that the wartime powers given to government could be of potential in planning post-war development.[50] Tea, sugar, bread, butter and clothing were rationed by a new Department of Supplies. Petrol was rationed, and then private motoring eliminated in 1934. Non-native fruit was in short supply and cigarettes and tobacco difficult to acquire. But Irish privations, in what was termed 'The Emergency', were slight, even in comparison with other neutral European states.[51] Kennedy et al, suggest that *'the most important lesson of the war years was that the strenuous protection of industry and agriculture in the 1930's had succeeded in changing only the nature, but not the fact, of Ireland's dependence on the outside world'.*[52] By the end of the war in 1945, Ireland was ready again to slowly build its economic links with the outside world.

The period immediately after the war illustrates the gradual nature of the major policy transitions, over several changes of government, from 1945 to 1973. Most authors see the publication of the **First Programme for Economic Development** in 1958 as the watershed event in moving away from the self-sufficient or "import- substitution-industrialisation" (ISI) model of development to an outward looking "export-led industrialisation" (ELI) model for economic development.[53] Alternatively, it is suggested that joining the European Economic Community in 1973 was the critical point in policy change.[54] For our present purposes, we note the growth in government spending immediately after the war, from 23 percent of GNP in 1945 to 39 percent in 1951, together with a shift within public expenditure to infrastructural capital investment.[55] A range of policy initiatives in the 1940's and 1950 prior to 1958, can be interpreted as precursors of a more thoroughgoing commitment to export-led industrialisation. The Industrial Development Authority was set up in 1949 and given broader powers in 1958, providing tax packages and other incentives for export-oriented companies that set up in Ireland. Export tax relief's had already been introduced in 1956.[56]

The changeover had begun. Yet the dominant image of the 1950's is of 'stagnation and failure'.[57] GDP rose by less than 1 percent per year; employment fell, half a million people emigrated between 1951 and

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48 Kennedy et al, opcit., p50-51 and Haughton, opcit., p37.
49 ibid.
50 Girvin, opcit., p131-168.
51 See Lee (1989), p234-235.
52 Kennedy et al, opcit., p52.
53 These terms are drawn from O'Malley (1992) 'Problems of Industrialisation in Ireland' in Goldthorpe & Whelan, (eds.), p31-52.
54 See Kennedy et al, opcit.
55 See Haughton, opcit.p37. Rural Electrification was a major public programme of this period.
56 ibid, p38-39.
57 In 1953, an Irish American writer, J.A. O'Brien edited a series of essays titled ' The Vanishing Irish', New York, McGraw-Hill.

1958.[58] Balance of payments crises were responded to by restraining total spending, bringing government budgets into balance and reducing demand still further. It is suggested by Haughton *(p. 38) that*

> *the key to understanding the 1950's is to note that this was the decade when Europe rebounded: Ireland's performance looks disappointing only by the standards of neighbouring countries, not by historical standards. Much of the emigration reflected the lure of improving wages elsewhere. One might better view the 1950's as a period of transition rather than one of failure.*

Phase IV - Export Led Industrialisation: Modernisation in Earnest 1958-1973

In 1958, change began in earnest with the publication of a White Paper, The First Programme for Economic Development, based on the analysis presented by T.K. Whitaker, the then young Secretary at the Department of Finance. Whitaker recognised the under-commercialised nature of Irish agriculture, the timidity of private capital and prescribed the *"reorientation of government investment towards more 'productive' uses and away from the primary emphasis on 'social' investment (such as housing). Tariffs were to be dismantled, and foreign capital sought."*[59] As a consequence of this new policy, a *"layer of foreign, multinational firms has been added to the Irish industrial structure since 1958."*[60] In the 1950's the dominant mood was *"a sense of despondency and near despair.in a society which was inward looking, ultra conservative in attitude, and lacking in self confidence and creativity."*[61] For many what is most remembered about the First Programme is that it struck an optimistic note in pessimistic times.[62] Between 1960 and 1973 (the period referred to by Mjoset as "the Golden Age" there was annual growth of 4.4 percent per annum. Emigration ceased and net immigration began.[63]

A reason frequently offered to explain why the Irish economy found it so difficult to develop in the years after the war, was the heavy dependence on agriculture and on the British economy. The U.K. was the "sick man" of Europe and was one of the most slowly growing western economies. As a major export market it had many defects, one of which was that it required food at the lowest possible price and created strong competition for its food market.[64] Shifting the balance from these dependencies was central to the new strategy. Employment by export-led, foreign investment, it was argued, would yield the growth not previously available. In 1963, the last of the old tariffs were taken away and supports provided to

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58 Haughton, opcit., p38-39.
59 Haughton, op cit., p39 and NESC (1992), p271-272.
60 From Sexton, (1986) 'Employment, Unemployment and Emigration' in Kennedy K. (ed.), Ireland in Transition, Cork: Mercier Press, p31-39.
61 NESC, (1992), p273.
62 ibid, p276
63 ibid.

traditional industries to modernise. In 1967 Ireland subscribed to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). When the U.K. was not admitted to the EEC, Ireland entered into an 'Anglo Irish Free Trade Area Agreement' in 1964.[65] Economic Nationalism' had been abandoned fully when in 1973 Ireland joined the European Economic Community.[66]

It was in this general context that major educational changes were initiated that would transform the VEC system. The dual-track system was to be replaced by a 'unified post-primary system' and schools in the 'Vocational system' were to be permitted to present pupils for the secondary Intermediate Certificate and Leaving Certificates. New 'Comprehensive schools' were to be established in Western areas. In 1966 Training Council (AnCO) was established with formal responsibility for apprenticeship and industrial training. The education system was re-examined in the **'Investment in Education Report' 1965.** The 'unified post-primary system' became the official policy, with significant implications for the vocational education system. [67]

Education was not the only sphere of social policy change. Developments in education and training are also to be located within the more general developments within the Irish 'welfare state'. In 1953, 51.7 percent of the labour force were included in a state social insurance programme. By 1971 the figure was 65.5 percent. Civil service employment grew by 34.6 percent in 1961-1971 and by another 57.8 percent 1971-1981. Between 1960 and 1973 the volume of manufacturing output more than doubled. Employment, however grew much more slowly - by about one-third over the period.[68] Kennedy suggests this was *"because the amount of capital per worker increased greatly, because efficiency in production rose all round, and because the new activities used much less labour per unit of output than the older activities."*[69] But by 1971 people had begun to return to the country. There was a strong sense of confidence in the potential of the Irish economy. The long nightmare of under-development and emigration seemed to be coming to an end.

Phase V:1973-1990

A significant improvement had been achieved in the economic performance of the Irish economy by 1973 when Ireland became a member of the EEC. Entry to the European Community created apprehensions, particularly for those traditional industries unused to competition on the home market. But for agriculture

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64 This line of argument is drawn from Kennedy (1988), p56-57.
65 Haughton, opcit. p41.
66 ibid. and Kennedy (1986), p42.
67 O'Connell & Rottman, (1992), p222.
68 ibid, p126.
69 Kennedy (1986), p42.

it was seen as a welcome support framework. State spending in support of agriculture grew from 65.5 IR£m in 1970, (none of it from European sources), to £1,136.9 million in 1989, of which 85 percent was paid by the European Community under the Common Agricultural Policy. Being integrated into a larger European economy worked well for commercial agriculture. The break with sterling in 1979, when the Irish currency was aligned with German D.mark within the EC, was a logical step.[70] Mobile foreign capital seeking investment opportunities within the European Community was assiduously courted by the Industrial Development Authority.

In 1973, 30 percent of employment was in companies owned by non-nationals, the U.K. being the nationality most represented. By 1990, 43 percent of aggregate employment was in non-Irish enterprise, and over 22 percent were American firms.[71] Commentators began to talk about a 'dual economy'. A fast track, modern, high-productivity economy, largely foreign owned, and a low-productivity, stagnant, local economy, with few linkages between them.[72] The 'oil crisis of 1973' and the slowing of the Western economies that followed, were the start for a renewal of difficulty in the Irish economy. Expansion in the 'public sector' was no longer sustainable. In 1971 deficits on current budgets were met by foreign borrowings for the first time. Increased deficits each year from 1971-1986 led to increased borrowings, till in 1987 the trend was reversed.[73] The 'engine of economic growth', in the form of inward direct foreign investment, became more expensive to attract and retain. Multi-national corporations, with little loyalty to the Irish economy, withdrew when the profitability of their plants declined in the international recession. More jobs were lost than created. Sexton (1990) demonstrates the (potential) labour force inflows as between 20 and 25 thousand each year from the mid 1980's to the year 2000.[74] An increasing dependency ratio, was added to by rising birth rates. Emigration returned as a significant feature of Irish life from 1984. The problem is further exacerbated by the high rate of repatriation of profits by foreign multi-nationals, resulting in a diminution of the benefits to Ireland of industrial growth.[75]

In 1990's the basic dilemma of the small open economy remains for Ireland. Bradley et al (1992) refers to *"the extreme openness of the Irish economy."*[76] Current commentaries adopt what is termed "The Interactive Outlook" which sees Ireland's economic development, despite the great openness of the Irish economy, as emerging *"from an interaction between international economic forces, the structural*

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70 Haughton, opcit., p42. As Britain did not join the EMS at this point the move was a decisive break with sterling for the Irish currency.

71 Rune, (1991), p355.

72 See Stewart, J.C. (1992) 'Foreign and Direct Investment and the Emergence of the Dual Economy' in Economic and Social Review, Vol.7, No.2, p173-197. Also NESC (1992), p36 on the growing role of 'high tech.' (high output per capita) as opposed to 'Medium Tech.' or 'Low Tech.' Industry in the Irish economy.

73 See Nolan and Nolan, (1991) p240-247, Table 7.5, p245.

74 Unpublished seminar paper, Sexton, J.J. (1992), 'Labour Projections of Potential Labour Force Supply'. (Not for formal citation).

75 See Bradley et al (1992), The Role of the Structural Funds, Dublin: ESRI, p8. In 1988, almost 60% of the profits of foreign owned multi-nationals was being repatriated and lost to the Irish economy.

76 Bradley et al (1992), p33.

characteristics of the Irish economy and society, and domestic and (European) Community policy."[77] This interaction between international and indigenous factors has been the consistent theme in economic development of the independent Irish State.

Review

Mjoset (in NESC (1992) No. 93) puts forward the following broad analysis:

> *...the late start of Irish industrial development (and the corresponding difficulty for exporting firms of passing barriers for entry) may be part of the explanation, (of Ireland's failure to create "full employment"); another part - borne out by the comparison with Denmark, is that in Ireland, the national system of innovation, and more generally linkages between export sectors and the rest of the economy, have been very weak.*[78]

This reference to the "system of innovation" focuses attention on the relationship between education and the economy:Mjoset goes on to suggest that some of the reason for the weakness in the system of innovation and the linkages between export sector and the rest of the economy *"must be found in the socio-political and social structural features of the country."*[79] Lee also identifies institutional and cultural characteristics of Irish society as having contributed in the relatively poor comparative performance of the Irish economy for most of the twentieth century.[80] These observations point to a relative failure on the part of the education system. The VECs were the exclusive locus of explicit educational initiatives by the Irish state in respect of economic development until the 1960's. It is apparent that they were insufficient to counter the weight of other factors - demographic, political and cultural - which characterised Irish society up to that point. The refocusing and expansion of all of Irish education with a more explicit economic purpose took place from the 1960's on, and in the process created an ongoing crisis of purpose for the VEC system. For the state, the educational expansion provided a platform for the strong economic performance of the mid to late 1990's which took place in a society with significantly changed cultural and political culture. In Chapter 6, the changing political and cultural contexts for the politics of Irish education and the VEC system is examined.

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77 O'Donnell, R., (1993), 'Ireland and Europe:Challenge for a New Century, Dublin:ESRI. p6.
78 NESC, (1992), p281.
79 ibid.
80 See Haughton, (1991), p44 and Lee (1989), Chapter 8, especially, p540ff.

CHAPTER 6

POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS FOR THE VEC SYSTEM

In this Chapter three themes which are central to the politics and culture of the twentieth century Irish State are examined. These are political nationalism, religion and language. All three are central also to the politics of Irish education. In addition, they mesh to give the distinctive character to twentieth century Irish society. This Chapter will present Irish political nationalism in a context of the broader development of nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and go on to outline its principal features. It will outline the pressures in Irish society generated by the nationalist agenda of the new state. The Chapter will examine the place of language issues in Irish society and the interface established between language revival programmes and education and go on to examine the interplay of religious affiliation on the social politics of the state.

The Irish Nation-State in Context

The late twentieth century has seen an increase in political strife on issues of state formation and dissolution. In Europe, recent decades have witnessed growing ethnic awareness. New European states were established when in 1944 Iceland became independent of Denmark, and in 1964 when Malta became an independent nation state. In the United Kingdom, both Scottish and Welsh separatism have become significant political issues.[1] Catalonia, the Basque area and Brittany are regions in major European states where ethnic separatism has been a major political issue in recent decades. These events have tended to undermine the commonly held view of Western European states as *'nation-states, which, had either successfully assimilated their disparate peoples (for example, Belgium, France, Spain, Switzerland or the United Kingdom, or were themselves the product of the political consolidation of a nationally conscious people) such as in Germany or Italy)'*[2] The emergence of ethnic cleavage as a political issue following the break up of the Soviet system has been a further occasion for the focus of attention on ethnic related conflict. The most dramatic manifestation of this conflict, in the former Yugoslavia, has ensured that the issues have been recently brought to the attention of very wide general public.

The processes of 'nation-building' developing in the sub-Sahara Africa since the 1960's when former colonies were granted independence, have meant that issues of ethnic cleavage within political units was a

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1 Northern Ireland may be regarded as a continuation of the Irish question.

2 See O'Connor, W. (1994) 'Ethnonationalism in the First World:the Present in Historical Perspective' in O'Connor, W. 'Ethnonationalism':A Quest for Understanding, - Princeton Univ. Press p 166.

major object of study in global politics. The enormity of the tragic consequences when such conflicts are unsuccessfully managed have been borne in on the world in 1993-1994. Ethnic conflict in the state of Rwanda between Hutu and Tutsi peoples has shocked the watching world.[3] Scholarly attention to the study of ethnic heterogeneity and its consequences has grown dramatically.[4]

The global dimensions of this topic are clearly illustrated in a survey finding, in which 132 "entities, generally considered to be states as of 1971" and reported in Connor, (1994: 96) as follows:

1. *Only twelve states (9.1 percent) can justifiably be described as nation states.*
2. *Twenty-five, (18.9 percent) contain a nation or potential nation accounting for more than 90 percent of the state 's total population but also contain an important minority.*
3. *Another twenty-five (19.9 percent) contains a nation or potential nation accounting for between 75 percent and 89 percent of the population.*
4. *In thirty-one (23.5 percent) the largest ethnic element accounts for 50 percent to 74 percent of the population.*
5. *In 39 (29.5 percent), the largest nation or potential nation accounts for less than half the population.*[5]

The twenty six county state on the island of Ireland falls into category 2 above, in which a nation or potential nation accounts for more than 90 percent of the state's total population but which also contains an important minority. The six county state on the island falls into category 4, in which the largest ethnic group accounts for 50 percent to 74 percent of the population. Both states owe their origins and establishment to processes with a similar dynamic to the Greek struggle for independence in 1820's, the liberation struggles of Waloons and Flemings in the 1830's, the political consolidation of Germany and Italy in the 1860's and 1870's, and the creation of Romania (1878), Serbia (1878), Norway (1905), Bulgaria

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3 For a characterisation of the Hutu/Tutsi conflict see Connor, (1994) p156-7.

4 The following selected list provides a sample of works cited in the academic literature on the issue.
Barker, E. (1927) National Character and the Factors in its Formation:London.
Cobban, A. (1949) 'National Self-Determination', Chicago:
Almond, G. & Coleman, J.S. (1960): The Politics of Developing Areas, Princeton:Princeton Univ. Press.
Emerson, R. (1960) From Empire to Nation, Boston
Jacob, PE. & Toscano, (eds) (1964) The Integration of Political Communities, Philadelphia.
Deutsch, K. & Folz, (eds) (1966) National-Building, New York.
Anderson, C.W., (1967) Issues of Political Development
Deutsch, K. (1969) Nationalism and its Alternatives, New York
Rose, R. (1970) The United Kingdom as Multinational State, Glasgow
Glazer, N. & Moynihan, D.P (1975) Ethnicity, Theory and Experience, Cambridge Mass.
Smith, A.D. (1981) The Ethnic Revival, Cambridge
Anderson, B. (1983), Imagined Communities:Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, London:Verso.
Gellner, E. (1983) Nations and Nationalism Oxford: Basil Blackwell
Horowitz, D. (1985) Ethnic Groups in Conflict, Berkeley, 1985.
Smith, A.D. (1991) National Identity:Hammondsworth, Penguin.
The main sources for the reflections on this section and for the above sample bibliography were:Connor, W. (1994) opcit. and Coakley, 1992(a) The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements:London:Sage. Paterson (1994), The Autonomy of Modern Scotland, Edinburgh: especially Ch.2., was helpful also. For example:Ethnic and Racial Studies , published by Routledge, London was established in 1977

5 Connor, opcit. p96.

(1908), Finland (1917), Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania Poland (1918) and Iceland in 1944.[6]

The intellectual roots of these movements towards 'national' liberation are traceable to the core assertions of enlightenment philosophy and the French Revolution - i.e. the 'Rights of Man', the 'sovereignty of the people' and the assertion in the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen (1789) that "*the source of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation:no group, no individual may exercise authority not emanating expressly therefrom.*"[7] Connor contends that '*since 1789, the dogma that "alien rule is illegitimate rule" has been infecting ethnically aware peoples in an ever-broadening pattern*'.[8] The term 'self-determination of nations', (employed in peace negotiations at the end of World War I and accepted as a basis for redrafting (some) European boundaries after that conflict), gave a formal legitimacy to the rhetoric of separatist movements, much to the discomfort of the major powers.[9] The expression was enshrined in the United Nations charter at the end of World War II.[10]

Connor contends that much of the difficulty encountered in the analysis of ethnic cleavages both within states and between states is due to "terminological chaos' in the language used in such analysis.[11] The most critical confusion is that between 'state' and 'nation', with consequent implications for the terms 'nationalism' and 'nation-state'. The chaos arises from the inter-utilization of the key terms 'nation' and 'state'. When 'international relations' means relations between states, and 'transnational visits' means 'visits to other states', the tacit assumption that 'state' and 'nation' are interchangeable terms is understandable. Both the League of Nations and the United Nations were/are organisations open only to states. This Chapter operates on a generally accepted definition of 'state' as a *'legal concept describing a social group that occupies a defined territory and is organised under common political institutions and an effective government'*[12]. This is a widely accepted definition. However, there is much less agreement about the term 'nation'. For Connor, "*nations are the largest human grouping characterised by a myth of common ancestry:The historical accuracy of the myth is irrelevant*"[13]; *."..the essence of a nation in intangible.*

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6 ibid. p169. Connor describes the history of Europe from the French Revolution as "..largely a tale of national liberation movements."

7 Quoted in Connor, ibid. Connor also cites Weber, E. (1976) Peasants into Frenchmen:The Modernization of Rural France'. Stanford:Stanford Univ. Press which establishes that the vast majority of people living within France were not conscious of being French until long after the French Revolution.

8 ibid.

9 See Broderick, J. (1994) 'De Valera and Archbishop Daniel Mannix' in History Ireland, Vol. 2. No. 3. p37-42 in which the Irish separatists in speaking tours of the U.S. use this rhetoric to advance their cause. For information on the use of the expression 'self determination of nations.' See Connor, opcit. pp60, 52.

10 ibid. p38.

11 See op.cit. Ch. 4. pp 89-117.

12 ibid, p40. The definition is drawn from Plano, J.C. and Olton, R. (1969) The International Relations Dictionary, New York, ' a dictionary designed for students of global politics'.

13 ibid. p80.

This essence is a psychological bond that joins a people and differentiates it, in the subconscious conviction of its members, from all other people in a most vital way"[14]. Arguing that ethnic and or 'nation' identity does not necessarily hinge on either language or religion, Connor suggests that "*what is fundamentally involved...is that divergence of basic identity which manifests itself in the 'us-them syndrome',... 'On (the) ultimate answer to the question of whether a person is one of us or one of them'.*[15] Harkness suggests that *"essentially the requirement is a sense of belonging together, of having more in common together than with other, or neighbouring peoples."*[16] Connor argues that the most fundamental error involved in scholarly approaches to nationalism has been the tendency to equate nationalism with a feeling of loyalty to the state rather than with loyalty to the nation.[17] To counter this error Connor coined the term 'ethnonationalism' which signals the ethnic dimension of nationalistic sentiment, which is contrasted with patriotism, or loyalty to the state.[18]

The lack of precision in the use of terms has not prevented overt consideration of issues associated with the integration of nations within states. Thus J.M. Mill argued in 1873, that *"it is in general a necessary condition of free institutions that the boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationality."*[19] While Lord Acton argued the "*coexistence of several nations under the same state is a test as well as the best security of its freedom."* He described a state within which no mixture of nationalities occurred as 'imperfect'. A state that attempted to neutralize or absorb divergent cultures, Acton maintained, destroys its own vitality and is decrepit.[20] The data cited above from the 1971 survey indicates clearly that there is no necessary correlation between existence as a nation and existence as a state. As Paterson (1994) clearly indicated in the case of Scotland, meaningful autonomy for nations within states is possible.[21] Further, no particular settlement of the relationship between nation and state can last forever. "*The constitutional debate in Scotland since the 1960's is merely Scotland's most recent instance of this. It is not the nation waking up after years of abject slumber: it is the latest phase in a recurrent process of national*

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14 ibid. p92.

15 ibid. p46.

16 In Harkness, D. (1988) 'Nation, State and National Identity in Ireland:Some Preliminary Thoughts' in Princess Grace Irish Library (ed) Irishness in a Changing Society, Gerrards Cross, Bucks:Colin Smythes, p123-131. p123. Harkness cites the following definitions from Keeton, G.W. (1949) Elementary Principles of Jurisprudence, 2nd Edition p30. A nation is: "a community of persons linked by their historical development, common speech or common social customs, or several of these criteria, in such a way that such persons would still tend to cohere even if separated under different governments" (p123). A state is: "an association of human beings, whose numbers are at least considerable, united with the appearance of permanence, for political ends, for the achievement of which certain governmental institutions have been evolved." (p124).
This definition of state is consistent with the views of the autonomous but not fully independent state in Scotland. In Paterson, L. (1994) The Autonomy of Modern Scotland, Edinburgh.

17 O'Connor, opcit. p91.

18 ibid. p207.

19 Mill, J.S. (1873) Considerations on Representative Government, New York, p313, cited in Connor, opcit. p7.

20 In Dalberg - Act, J.E. (1907) The History of Freedom and Other Essays, London, p270-300, cited in Connor, opcit. p6 & 7.

21 See Paterson (1994) The Autonomy of Modern Scotland, Edinburgh:Edinburgh Univ. Press, especially Ch. 2. p10-26.

mobilisation to readjust the bargain that emerged from the previous phase."[22] While many authors have argued that modernisation, which brought intensified industrialization, urbanization, increasing literacy, intensified communication and transportation networks led to the successful assimilation of desperate ethnic groups into unified citizens of a single state, Connor argues cogently that in some circumstances these modernising processes have in fact heightened ethnic awareness and stimulated nationalist mobilisation towards separatism.[23] In summarising the findings of a wide range of authors addressing the social origins of nationalist movements, Coakley (1992) identifies significant effects arising from:

- social dislocation arising for certain groups in association with the process of modernisation
- the persistence of colonial-type conflicts in the economic, social or political domain
- the resources available to "peripheral" political elites - in terms of demography, economics, unifying myths and political organisation
- the relative significance of either (or both) religion or socialism as a mobilisation framework[24]

Among the above, it is suggested that the existence or absence of what are termed 'unifying myths' are of particular importance in a consideration of the interplay of ethnic/nationalist and state identity. These unifying myths are of particular relevance when we consider the role of the system of education. Schmitt (1994) stresses the significance of group perception in defining 'ethnicity' as referring "*to communal aggregation based upon religion, race, language or culture, where group members perceive themselves as distinct and are so perceived by others within the society.*"[25] Jenkins (1994) in stressing the role of internal (self) definition in the composition of ethnic groups, makes a similar point while also stressing the variety of factors around which ethnic identity may be built: -

> *...ethnicity is not an immutable bundle of cultural traits which it is sufficient to enumerate in order to identify a person as an 'x' or a 'y' or locate the boundaries between ethnic collectivities. Rather,*

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22 ibid. p20-21.

23 See De Swaan, (1988) In the Care of the State, Cambridge:Polity, p2-3 and O'Connor, opcit. p166 ff. See also Paterson's treatment of the role of the technocratic state in stimulating nationalistic mobilisation in modern Scotland, opcit. p20ff. This point is graphically illustrated in the fluctuations apparent in Maps of Europe in late nineteenth century, between 1921 and 1939 and after 1945 in Paterson, opcit. p75, 135 and 145. A map of Europe in 1997 would confirm the tendency.

24 See Coakley, J. (eds.) (1992) The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements:The Contemporary West European Experience, London:Sage p215-215.

25 Schmitt, D.E. (1994) 'Resolving conflict in bicommunal political systems' in Gaelke, A. (ed). New Perspectives on the Northern Ireland Conflict, Aldershot:Avebury, p175-189, see p175-6. Paterson, (1994: 25) prefers not to use the term 'myths' to describe the set of beliefs that constitute the unifying ideological basis of ethnic and nationalist identity because of its "irreducibly prejorative tone' and 'patronising implications'. He does, however, talk of the "conscious process of symbolically constructing a community", a phrase reflective of Anderson's 'imagined communities'.

ethnicity is situationally defined, produced in the course of social interactions that occur at or across (and in the process help to constitute) the ethnic boundary in question.[26]

Political Nationalism In Ireland, 1930-1990

In this section it is proposed to outline briefly the extent to which political/cultural identity and nationality/language issues were reflected in political competition in Ireland, 1930-1990. After the Act of Union, 1800, people on the island of Ireland were mobilised around four central issues:The Union versus separatist legislatures; economic issues, primarily land, as a source of wealth and power; on issues of language, and finally on issues of religion. Questions in respect of the Union were settled for the twentieth century, by the establishment of the Northern and Southern states in 1920-1923. Contestation around this settlement continues and the last decade of this century is a period of major re-evaluation of this settlement.

In 1918 a confluence of events meant that a large number of M.P.'s. elected to represent Ireland at the Westminster House of Commons were sufficiently separatist in their nationalism to refuse to take their Westminster seats. Instead they established an Assembly of the 'Irish Republic' in Dublin, in opposition to the British administrative system.[27] This assembly met in Dublin from 1919 to 1922 and contested the legitimacy of the Westminster government in Ireland. In December 1920, the Westminster parliament passed the Government of Ireland Act which provided for:

(a) the establishment of parliaments for Southern Ireland and for Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland being defined as the counties of Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry (sic) and Tyrone,

(b) provided for the establishment of a Council of Ireland *."..with a view to....bringing about harmonious action between the parliaments and governments of Southern Ireland and Northern Ireland*, (Art.2.1) and

(c) provided for the establishment of a parliament for the whole of Ireland, "*agreed by an absolute majority of members of the House of Commons of each Parliament (Art. 3.1)*"[28].

In December 1922, an agreement between Great Britain and "Irish representatives" (i.e. delegates of the Dublin assembly established after the 1918 elections) provided for the establishment of an Irish Free State

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[26] Jenkins, R. (1994) 'Rethinking Ethnicity:identity, categorisation and power', in Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 17, No. 2 p197-209.

[27] Among the events referred to was the death of the leader of the Irish Nationalist Party, John Redmond in March 1918, the proposal of conscription in Ireland and the emergence of Sinn Fein notables such as Eamonn de Valera, Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins as alternative leaders of a more radical nationalism. See Hughes, M. (1994) Ireland Divided:The Roots of the Modern Irish Problem, Cardiff. University of Wales Press p46-47 and Lee (1989) opcit. p38-43. In the election from a total of 105 seats for the whole island, Unionists won 27, Sinn Fein (radical nationalists) won 73, and the moderate Nationalist party under a new leader won merely 5. In the area that eventually became the Free State there were 3 unionist M.Ps and 70 "Sinn Feiners" - Coakley and Gallagher (ed) (1992) Politics in the Republic of Ireland, Galway, PSAI Press, Appendix 2a p236.

with Dominion status, the same as Canada within "*the Community of Nations known as the British Commonwealth of Nations.*"[29]

The Irish Free State constitution was adopted by plebiscite of the area designated as Southern Ireland under the terms of the Government of Ireland Act. It provided, inter alia, for a Governor General, as the representative of the King in Ireland, and for an oath to be taken by all members of the Free State Parliament to

> *be faithful to H.M. King George V, his heirs and successors by law in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations (Article 17)*[30].

This latter provision, agreed in the Anglo-Irish Treaty, was the most acrimonious point of dispute in the divisions among nationalists in the Dublin assembly[31]. A substantial minority group, led by the President of the Dublin assembly (or Dail), Eamon de Valera, rejected the treaty. There followed a civil war from June 1922 to April 1923 in which an estimated 4,000 casualties were inflicted[32]. The cleavage established by that period of conflict has continued to be a major feature of Irish politics.[33] The anti-treaty side called on their comrades to "*guard the nation's honour from the infamous stigma that her sons aided her foes in retaining the hateful domination over her.*"[34] By the end of the civil war, de Valera conceded that "*other means must be sought to safeguard the nation's right.*" From 1922 to 1927, the anti-Treaty side declined to participate in the Free State parliament.

The Pro-Treaty element of Sinn Fein, renamed as Cumann na nGhaedhal (the Party of the Gael) provided the first government of the Free State.[35] A small Labour Party, a farmer's party and twelve independents (some of whom were former southern unionists) provided the opposition[36]. In 1927, de Valera's party, now organised as 'Fianna Fail', agreed to enter the Dail, on the pragmatic basis that the oath could be deemed an "empty formula."[37]. In 1932, they formed the Government. The new government moved steadily over ten

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The text of the Government of Ireland Act 1920 is substantially reproduced in Hughes (1994) opcit. p101-107.

29 Article 1 of the Constitution of the Irish Free State 1922 (Saorstat Eireann). It is interesting to note that the text of the 1922 agreement referred to "the community of nations known as the British Empire", Article 1 of the Agreement, 6 December 1921, as reproduced in Hughes, opcit. p110.

30 ibid.

31 See Lee (1989) opcit. p67 for a discussion of the reasons for the divergence of views.

32 ibid. p68.

33 See Lee (1989) p69 where he compares the Irish civil war 1922-23 with the Finnish civil war 1918 from which much less longterm political division ensued though there was considerably more brutality and loss of life.

34 Proclamation of the IRA leadership, 28 June 1922, reproduced in Hughes (1994) opcit. p119.

35 The pro-treaty side was joined by former home rule nationalists and in the new parliament.

36 See Lyons, F.S.L. (1971) Ireland Since the Famine: Glasgow:Fontana, p484-5.

37 de Valera had formed a new political party Fianna Fail (Soldiers of Destiny) "The Republican Party with 'ultimate aims')

years to assert a greater cultural, economic and political separateness. Under the terms of the 1931 Statute of Westminster, commonwealth states were authorised to amend or repeal British legislation that affected them.[38] This authority was used in 1933 to remove the Privy Council in London from the Free State justice system and the right of the King's representative to veto Free State legislation.[39] The abdication crisis in 1936 was used as an opportunity to remove almost all references to the Governor General from the constitution, which in turn left the way open for the adoption of a new constitution in 1937. As Lee points out.

> *...the very structure of the constitution betrays the difficulties of the de Valera dialectic on the crucial question of identity. Articles 1-3 deal with The Nation; Articles 4-11 deal with the State" - But de Valera makes no attempt to define the Nation.*[40]

In 1938, as part of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of that year, Article 7 of the 1922 Treaty was set aside. Under this article, the Free State was bound in time of war to provide such harbour and other facilities as Britain might require for her defence and British military establishments were kept at a number of key maritime locations.[41] The removal of these provisions made possible the policy of military neutrality adopted by the Irish Free State during the 1939-45 war.[42] The issue of separatist, national state identity established in contra-distinction with British identity and state, was a critical field on which political parties competed for electoral support.[43] It is to this competition and to the use of nationalist rhetoric that O'Brien (1994) attributes the move made by a coalition government to declare, that the twenty-six county free state was to be a republic in 1949.[44] The principle party in that coalition was Fine Gael, the successor of the original pro-treaty side. As Coakley puts it, "*the anti-treaty side had come to terms with the treaty, and the pro-treaty side had declared a republic.*"[45]

The twenty-six county state was now outside the commonwealth and the Westminster parliament passed The Ireland Act, guaranteeing that the Northern Ireland state, established in 1920, would remain part of the

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(i) securing the political independence of a united Ireland as a republic
(ii) the restoration of the Irish language and the development of a native Irish culture. See Keogh (1994) opcit. p42 ff.

38 See Coakley, J. (1992) 'The Foundations of Statehood' in Coakley and Gallagher (eds) Politics in the Republic of Ireland, Galway: PSAI p15.

39 ibid. In 1932, de Valera had replaced the existing Governor General with a friend of his, who lived in his own house rather than the Vice-Regal Lodge, a move which a contemporary described s "reduce (in) the position of governor-general to that of a Gaelic rubber stamp.." See Keogh, (1994) p68.

40 Lee (1989) opcit. p205

41 Keogh (1994) p104. The 1938 Anglo Irish Agreement is also dealt with in the paper on "Economic Contexts."

42 ibid.

43 See Coakley (1992) 'Society and Political Culture' in Coakley and Gallagher (eds) opcit. p23-39, see especially p34-35.

44 See O'Brien, C.C. Ancestral Voices:Religion and Nationalism in Ireland, Dublin: Poolbeg Press, p134-5.

45 See Coakely (1992) "The Foundation of Halehood", p16.

United Kingdom, until the Northern Ireland parliament decided otherwise.[46] Violent conflict, almost exclusively in the Northern state, has been a sporadic aspect of the British and Irish identity interplay during all of the period under review. An aggravated phase of violent activity which started in 1969 led in 1974 to the Northern Ireland Act, under which direct rule of that state by the Westminster government operates and is reviewed annually. In 1972, both Britain and the Republic of Ireland joined the EEC, and ceded some limited elements of state sovereignty in the process. These developments, taken together, have heightened awareness of and discourse about identity, and has facilitated the exploration of constitutional adjustments in the two states[47]. The Sunningdale Agreement of 1973, which was rendered inoperable by opposition within Northern Ireland[48], and the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, and more recent initiatives, may be seen in these terms. A critical dimension of the Anglo-Irish Agreement is the formal acknowledgement by the Government of the Republic that the people of Northern Ireland have a right to British state structures should the people of that Northern Ireland state continue to so desire.[49]

The extent to which contemporary understanding of the recent past is the battle ground on which the question of identity is today being contested is comprehensively illustrated in Brady (1994) which presents a number of major documents in the current debate about Irish identity, under the rubric of 'the debate on historical revisionism'[50]. Other works such as Hutton and Stewart (eds.) (1991) and O'Ceallaigh, (eds.) (1994) also bring together texts in the intense contemporary debate on identity[51]. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries then the concept of identity and its consequences have been, and continue to be, major matters of public debate and dispute. It is not proposed to present an analysis here of the development of nationalist identities in 19th century Ireland. The interwoven effects of the mobilizations which took place in the nineteenth century led to the configurations of identities in the states formed in the beginning of the twentieth century. Accounts of this process chart the growing identity established between Catholicism, rurality and Gaelic language usage as a nationalist ideal for the southern state:the northern state was Protestant, industrialised and decidedly British.[52] Neither of these simplicities does justice to the complexity of identity in either state.

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46 See Hughes (1994) opcit. p76.

47 The politics of the period 1970-1990 has been dominated by the issue. See Hughes (1994) opcit. p77ff and Keogh (1994) opcit. p295-380.

48 See Hughes (1994) opcit. p85.

49 ibid. p87.

50 Brady, C. (ed.) 1994 Interpreting Irish History:The Debate on Historical Revisionism, Dublin:Irish Academic Press.

51 Hutton, S. & Stewart, P (1991) Ireland's Histories:Aspects of State, Society and Ideology:London, Routledge. [This work carries the following dedication from its editors:] "To our fathers, who come from differing cultural and political traditions in the island of Ireland, and who have sought to separate themselves from the sectarianism which besets those traditions; and in memory of our mothers, who strove likewise."
O'Ceallaigh, D. (1994) Reconsiderations of Irish History and Culture, Dublin:Leimheas.
The journals The Crane Bag 1977-1985 and The Irish Review 1986-date contain much of the public debate.

52 Useful reviews of this process are to be found in Cairns, D. and Richards, S. (1988) Writing Ireland:Colonialism, nationalism and Culture, Manchester:Manchester Univ. Press and in O'Tuathaigh, M.A.G. (1986) 'Religion, Nationality and a sense of Community in Ireland' in O'Tuathaigh (ed.) Community, Culture and Conflict:Aspects of the Irish Experience, Galway:Galway Univ. Press p64-81. See also Foster,

In 1921, L.S. Amery - an English politician wrestling with the problem of Irish separatism - was asserting:

> *There is no Irish race but only, generally speaking, the same mixture of Celt and Dane and Saxon and Norman that makes up the English and Scotch.*[53]

In 1916, however, the revolutionary separatists who forcibly commandeered key institutional sites in Dublin in a gesture of violent revolt, had proclaimed an Irish Republic with the words, (written in English):"Irishmen and Irishwomen:in the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom[54]. The Sinn Fein election manifesto for 1918 claimed:

> *The coming General Election is fraught with vital possibilities for the future of our nation. Ireland is faced with the question whether this generation wills it that she is to march out into the full sunlight of freedom, or is to remain in the shadow of a base imperialism that has brought and ever will bring in its train naught but evil for our race.*[55]

By 1972, the following definition of "the Irish race" was offered by Conor Cruise O'Brien.

> *Primarily, people of native Irish stock, descended from Gaelic speakers, professing the Catholic religion, and holding some form of the general political opinions held by most people of this origin and religion. Secondarily, people of settler stock in Ireland, and Protestant religion:to the extent that these cast in their lot with people in the first category, culturally or politically, or preferably both.*[56]

Moody (1978) has reviewed the emergence of this situation as follows:

> *The Irish nation of the late eighteenth century, the nation of Gratten and Flood, of Charlemont, of Tone, the Emmets, Fitzgerald and Henry Joy McCracken, to which Davis looked back with pride, was a protestant nation, and it had perished in the horrors of the 1798 rebellion. The Irish nation that was raised to self-consciousness by Daniel O'Connell in the 1820's was overwhelmingly a catholic nation, identified with the catholic church and its clergy. As the catholic church emerged out of the shadows of the penal laws to become the strongest social institution in Ireland, Irish protestants were haunted by the spectre of a catholic ascendancy replacing protestant ascendancy. They closed their divided ranks.... A protestant element remained in the nationalist movement... But within a few years the broad correlation of protestants with unionists and*

R.F. (1989) Modern Ireland:1600-1972, London:Penguin p289-460. Also Hepburn, A.C. (1980) The Conflict of Nationality in Modern Ireland, London:Edward Arnold, which contains a representative set of documents of the process.

53 Quoted in Harkness, D. (1988) 'Nation, State and National Identity in Ireland:some preliminary thoughts' in The Princess Grace Irish Library (ed). Irishness in a Changing Society, Gerards Cross, Bucks:Colin Smythe.

54 Proclamation of the Irish Republic, 24 April 1916.

55 1918 Sinn Fein Election Manifesto, reproduced in Hughes, M. (1994) Ireland Divided:The Roots of the Modern Irish Problem, Cardiff, Univ. of Wales Press, p99-101.

56 This definition is in O'Brien, C.C. (1972) States of Ireland, London:Hutchinson, p51. In a review essay published in 1976 O'Brien presents a more graphic statement:"Irishness is not primarily a question of birth or blood or language:it is the condition of being involved in the Irish situation and usually of being mauled by it, in 'Irishness' from O'Brien, C.C. (1976) Writers and Politics, Essays and Criticism:Hammondsworth:Penguin, p132-135.

Catholics with nationalists was re-established, and was to be reflected in the position of Ireland in 1920-2.[57]

Lee (1988) suggests that partition saved the Free State from many of the problems of new nations.

> *The creation for the first time in history of a united independent Ireland would indeed have meant the creation of a new nation. Nation building would have occurred only had the state embraced all Ireland... D'Azeglio's cryptic comment 'We have made Italy. All that remains is to make Italians', did not have to be applied to* Ireland. *'No new nation had to be created in 1922, only a new state.*[58]

Coakley (1992) examines the development of nationalism in Ireland in a comparative context in which he suggests that the most fruitful comparative context for Irish nationalism is a central and East European one, and that the closest parallels are with those nationalist movements which succeeded in creating new, independent states at around the same time as the Irish Free State came into existence.[59] Three characteristics are identified as significant. In Ireland as elsewhere, there existed a *"substantial, ethnically distinct, indigenous population whose members occupied positions of relatively high economic, social and political status."*[60] Secondly, there was in Ireland, as in almost all other peripheral nationalities, a strong linkage between the political nationalist movement and the revival of a language and decaying culture which strengthened the national sense of identity and solidarity. This pattern is to be found in the case of almost all peripheral nationalities emerging at the end of the nineteenth century. Finally, there was in common a 'cultural division of labour'.

> *The fact that most members of the peripheral nationality were peasants (Irish Catholics, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians) whose landlords adhered to the culture of the privileged minority (Irish Protestants, Germans in Estonia and Latvia, Poles in Lithuania) added a further dimension of class warfare to the already bitter one of cultural conflict.*[61]

The struggle of the majority for democracy and political autonomy was simultaneously a struggle for an improvement of its economic position.

Ruane and Todd (1992) present the following succinct analysis:

> *Nineteenth-century nationalism....was the product of three forces; first, a process of economic, political and cultural peripheralisation which Ireland underwent in the nineteenth century as it became incorporated into an increasingly integrated British Isles; second, the presence of a legacy of unresolved political, religious and cultural conflicts deriving from the English*

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57 Moody, T.W. (1978) 'Irish History and Irish Mythology' in Brady (1994) p71-86, p81. A more nuance version is presented in Lyons, F.S.L. (1979) Culture and Anarchy in Ireland 1890-1939, Oxford: Oxford Press, esp p1-85.

58 Lee (1989) p93.

59 Coakley, J. (1990) 'Typical case or deviant? Nationalism in Ireland in a European Perspective' in Hill, M. and Barber, S. (eds) Aspects of Irish Studies, Belfast:Institute of Irish Studies, Queens Univ. of Belfast, p29-35, p29.

60 ibid. p30.

61 ibid.

colonisation of Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and third, the rise of nationalism as an ideology in late nineteenth century Europe. The first two of these provided an inter-related set of tensions and problems to which the third, nationalism and an independent Ireland - was the perceived solution.[62]

In recent decades, Coakley suggests, Irish people's commitment to nationalism appears to have weakened. A "psychological gap" between the south and northern Ireland appears to have grown[63]. Survey evidence for 1988/89 suggests that southern Irish people "*felt considerably closer to English (or British) people than to Northern Irish of both communities*":Forty-nine percent agreed that Northern Ireland and the Republic were two separate nations:(forty two percent disagreed)[64]. In short, cultural identity as nationalism is currently in a state of transition.

The nature of the religious foundations for the national identity is illustrated in the article of the 1937 constitution which recognised the 'Special Position' of the Roman Catholic Church as the church of the majority of the people. In the words of a prominent member of de Valera's government *...the constitution was worthy of a Catholic nation...*[65] and in its social clauses "*blended Catholic concepts with popular attitudes.*"[66] To understand this dimension of the political context it is necessary for us to digress briefly to consider the interpenetration of religious and ethnic elements in Irish nationalism.

Language and Identity in the Irish State

The history of Ireland is the history of the various peoples who inhabited Ireland ever since the first advent of man to our shores, but it is, more particularly, the study of the Gaelic race and civilisation, and of the resistance of that race and civilisation to foreign dominations, whether Norse, Norman or English.

Department of Education: 1933.[67]

The disappearance of this ancient member of the Celtic family of tongues from living speech may be somewhat delayed or somewhat accelerated by circumstances beyond calculation or conjecture, but there can be no error in the belief that within relatively a few years Irish will have taken its place among the languages that have ceased to exist.[68]

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62 From Ruane and Todd (1992) in Coakley, J. (1992 (a)) The Social Origins etc." p194-5 (also quoted in Coakley (1992) 'Society and Political Culture' p35.

63 Coakley (1992) 'Society and Political Culture..." p 35.

64 ibid. The survey referred to is in MacGreil, M. (1992) Irish Political Attitudes and Opinions, Maynooth, Survey and Research Unit, St. Patrick's College.

65 Quoted in Lee p206.

66 ibid.

67 Dept. of Education (1933) Notes for National Teachers, cited in Coakley (1994).

68 Census of Population of Ireland 1871, Part 3, p130. quoted in Hindley, opcit. p20.

Coakley has maintained that the language boundary in Ireland was of almost no significance[69]. The intercommunal boundary, he suggests, was instead defined in terms of religious denominational affiliation, reinforced on the catholic side by a powerful myth of history and consciousness of past linguistic and cultural distinctiveness, and on the protestant side by economic and political interests.[70] In Coakley's view the Irish language revival movement shared 'superficial similarities' with language movements elsewhere, including the tendency to be sponsored in its earliest phase by members of the minority.[71] It is, however, the case that the Irish language has been granted an elevated formal role in the nationalist/catholic state and the revival and development of the language was assigned as the major mission for the Department of Education established in the new state.[72] The decline in the use of the Gaelic language was quite dramatic during the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The first census, in 1841, recorded about 50% of the population (of over eight millions) to be Irish speakers.[73] Ten years later, after the Famine, the figure was 23.3%; and by 1891, it had fallen to the point where 14.5% of the population claimed to be able to speak Irish, and a mere 0.8% were speakers of Irish only.[74] The distribution of the contracting pattern of Irish speaking areas was also quite pronounced, with the progressive Anglicisation of the island from the eastern seaboard, moving west, so that by the end of the nineteenth century, Irish speaking areas were confined to the western extremities and islands off the west coast. The analyses of census returns for the period up to 1891 presented by Hindley (1990) and Fitzgerald (1990) show that "the more fertile eastern townlands fell to English first, followed by the western towns and their more prosperous hinterlands."[75] Areas with a majority of Irish speakers were, by 1891 dispersed into ten geographically distinct blocks, isolated from each other by anglicised districts which usually included their principal market towns[76].

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69 Coakley, 1992, opcit. p34.

70 ibid. p34-35.

71 ibid.

72 For example, Irish was proclaimed the National Language in the 1922 Constitution (Art. 4) and in the 1937 Constitution the Irish (Gaelic) language version of the 1937 constitution is given precedence in interpretative disputes over the English language version. The separatist First Dail appointed a Minister for Irish to the cabinet. Only later did the appointee, also the President of the Gaelic League, become a Minister for Education. See O'Buachalla (1988) p342. For a discussion see O'Buachalla p 341 f.f. and Lee (1989) opcit. p132.

73 It is thought among scholars that the numbers of Irish speakers are under-estimated in census figures up to 1900:thereafter it is thought they may be over-represented. See Walsh, R.G. (1986) 'The Death of the Irish Language' and McCarthy, D. (1986) 'The Founding of the Gaelic League', both in De Paor (ed) Milestones in Irish History, Cork:Mercier Press. Hindley, R. (1990) The Death of the Irish Language, London:Routledge p15, presents estimates of Irish language use from 1799-1851 which corroborates the general picture outlined above, as does Fitzgerald, G. (1990) 'The decline of the Irish Language 1771-1871'in Daly, M. & Dickson, D. (eds) The Origins of Popular Literacy in Ireland, Dublin: UCD/TCD History Depts. p59-72.

74 Hindley, opcit. p19.

75 Hindley opcit. p18-19.

76 See Hindley, opcit. p18 and Fitzgerald p71. for maped data.

In 1871 the writer of the census report of that year was offering the view:

> *The disappearance of this ancient member of the Celtic family of tongues from living speech may be somewhat delayed or somewhat accelerated by circumstances beyond calculation or conjecture, but there can be no error in the belief that within relatively a few years Irish will have taken its place among the languages that have ceased to exist.*[77]

Circumstances did emerge which had the effect of 'somewhat delaying' the complete demise of the language. The critical circumstances were the establishment of the Gaelic League in 1893 and the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922. In 1892, Douglas Hyde delivered a lecture to the Irish National Literary Society under the title 'The necessity of de-Anglicising the Irish Nation'.[78] Hyde was the son of a Church of Ireland clergyman in Roscommon, of an ascendancy family and educated at Trinity College Dublin[79]. In his background he had much in common with other members of the 'colonial elite' who in that century, advocated the preservation of the language as an element of a broad cultural identification with the history of the island.[80] The period between 1890 and 1930 has been described as one of "desperate attempts to become the definers of the thoughts expressed by the nations 'articulate voice'." It has been argued that the identification of the language as the touchstone of the emerging nationality was a political strategy which allowed the inclusion of protestants and unionists in the emerging nation[81]. Arguing for the need to accentuate the unifying power of the language, Hyde argued that the *"failure of the Irish people in recent times has been largely brought about by the race diverging during this century from the right path, and ceasing to be Irish without becoming English..."*[82] The unifying concept was the 'Gael', the Irish speaking Irishman who carried the one trait which allowed a clear distinction to be made between Irish and English.[83] In a period in which parliamentary nationalism was disorganised because of the split in the Irish party over the Parnell divorce, cultural nationalism which focused on the language became a potent source of mobilisation. However, if the Gaelic League articulated as an ideal, that "every person in Ireland being an Irishman", the reality was significantly different. The Gaelic League and the Irish language revival was aimed, at a deeper level, at *"stimulating the old peasant, Papist aboriginal population and we (the Gaelic League) care very little about the others though I would not let this be seen...."*[84]

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77 Census of Population of Ireland 1871, Part 3, p130. quoted in Hindley, opcit. p20.

78 See O'Cuiv, B. 'Introduction to the 1966 edition of Hyde, D. A Literary History of Ireland:London:Ernest Benn Ltd., p xviii. The full text of the address is published in Duffy, Sigerson & Hyde (1894). The Revival of Irish Literature:Addresses republished by Unwin in 1973.

79 See Foster (1989) p447-448.

80 For a discussion of the significance for emerging Irish nationalism of this intellectual trend in nineteenth century Ireland, see Cairns and Richards (1988) p22-57 also Green, D. (1966) 'The Founding of the Gaelic League' in O'Tuama (ed) The Gaelic League Idea, p9-19.

81 Cairns and Richards, opcit. 64-65.

82 Hyde (1894) Extract in Hepburn, A.C. (1980) The Conflict of Nationality in Modern Ireland, London:E. Arnold p60-61.

83 Lyons, J.M. (1994) 'The Herder Syndrome:a comparative study of cultural nationalism' in Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 17. No. 2.argues (in a comparative study of 'literal reformers'/historicist intellectuals, i.e. alienated but progressive intellectuals) that their personal need for a restated cultural myth and identity was a feeling commonly shared by the outsiders who were critical in developing cultural nationalism.

84 From Hyde's correspondence to Lady Gregory 7/1/1901, in Hepburn (1980) p65.

The early membership of the Gaelic League was respectable, suburban, bourgeois and tiny, up to 1899[85]. By 1904, however, the League had 50,000 members and almost 600 branches.[86] Murray points out that the Gaelic League was primarily a pressure group on education questions, or more precisely, on the question of the Irish language in various facets of the education system[87]. In all analyses of the rapid nineteenth century decline of the Irish language, a central place was given to the role of the education system, especially the national schools, in spreading the use of English.[88] The first concessions by the education system to the Irish language had been made in 1878 when Irish (or Celtic) was included in the syllabus of the Intermediate Examination system then established[89]. In 1900 the teaching of Irish in primary schools was permitted during school hours, with attendance optional. In 1900, also, after a sharp controversy, which did much to polarise views around the concept of 'Irish-Ireland', the status of Irish in the Intermediate schools was considerably improved, with additional grant support and additional marks at examinations. As a result the number of secondary schools offering Irish trebled, between 1899 and 1902 and by 1904, 30 percent of all pupils presented Irish as one of their examination subjects.

In 1913 the Gaelic League had its major educational victory when the National University of Ireland, established in 1908 after lengthy controversy, agreed to require a pass in Irish for matriculation.[90] [It is noted that neither Trinity College Dublin, nor the Queen's University of Belfast has ever required Irish for matriculation].[91] Hindley identifies this development as critical in encouraging middle class catholic study of the language - to the present day[92]

The objects of the Gaelic League were not confined to gaelicising the education system but rather extended to the more ambitious task of *'The preservation of the Irish language as the national language of Ireland, and the extension of its use as a spoken language'*[93]. The second major strategy of the organisation was the Gaelic League classes'.

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85 Foster (1988) opcit. p448.

86 Hindley (1990) p24 MacAodha (1966) (opcit p21) claims the real progress was made after 1901.

87 Murray, P. 1993 'Irish cultural nationalism in the U.K. State: politics and the Gaelic League, 1900-1918' in Irish Political Studies, 8, p55-72. p55.

88 Hindley, opcit. p24.

89 See O'Fiaich, T. (1966) 'The Great Controversy' in O'Tuama S. ed 'The Gaelic League Idea' p63-76.

90 Hindley, opcit. p25-26.

91 The NCEA (National Council for Education Awards established in 1979 to validate non-university third-level courses in Ireland and the new universities established at Limerick and Dublin in 1989 have not required Irish for admission to their courses. The National University of Ireland (N.U.I.) institutions, i.e. University College Dublin (UCD), University College Galway (UCG) and University College Cork (UCC), continue to do so. See Prospectus for each institution. Also O'Boyle, E.P (1990) CAO/CAS College Guide 1991:The All Ireland University and College Guide:Dundalk:Careers and Educational Publishers Ltd. For discussion of the effects of the education campaigns on the mobilisation of Irish Ireland see O'Fiaich (1966) opcit. and O'Cuiv, B. (1966) 'Education and Language' in Williams, D. (ed) The Irish Struggle 1916-1926. London, RKP p153-166, and Murray 1994, opcit.

92 opcit. p25-26.

93 Quoted in O'Cuiv, opcit. p158.

> *Wherever a branch was started, it set up an Irish class where week after week from September to June the dedicated members assembled in the local school or hall and with the aid of a travelling teacher and O'Gowney's Simple Lessons amassed a store of useful words and phrases, simple stories, greetings and proverbs, poems and songs...*[94]

Hindley suggests, however, that all of this activity did not amount to any significant change in the underlying pattern of language decline. Examining the figures for usage, with due cognisance of the likely effects of over statement of Irish language ability, he reports that

> *23.1 percent of persons aged 12 in 1911 had lost Irish by disuse by 1926*",

and he appears to concur with the contemporary estimate that

> *around 200 is the total number of all those who had attended League classes before independence and emerged able to speak it with reasonable fluency.*[95]

The initiatives undertaken in respect of the language by the new state had two major points of focus - the education system and socio-economic support for Irish speaking areas. In February 1922, all national schools were instructed to teach Irish or to use it as a medium of instruction for at least an hour per day wherever a competent teacher was available[96]. By the 1930's, the question of teachers remuneration was firmly linked to their competence in the Irish language. By 1937, 40-60 percent of national schools were employing Irish as the medium of instruction for part of their work and 12 percent were using Irish only. In effect, the Department of Education took on the broad policy positions of the Gaelic League.[97] The general thrust of these policy positions was modified following the publication of a study in 1966 which argued that the concentration on the teaching of Irish left children at a disadvantage in respect of their general education.[98] By 1973, Irish was no longer required as an essential subject in state examinations and exemptions were introduced which allowed some children attend courses without being required to attend classes in Irish.[99]

The effects of policies pursued on the founding of the independent twenty six county state may be gleaned from Table 6.1 below, adapted from Hindley. By 1981, fifty-one percent of 15-19 self identified as 'Irish speakers', compared with twenty-seven percent in 1926.

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94 This description is from O'Fiaich, (1966) opcit. p63.

95 Hindley, opcit. p27.

96 Hindley, opcit. p37.

97 For a detailed examination of the language revival policy in education see O'Buachalla (1988) p341-356.

98 MacNamara, J. (1964) Bilingualism and Primary Education: a Study of Irish Experience. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press.

Table 6.1

Irish Speakers classified by age group

Census 1926-1981

Age Group	No. 1926	No. 1981	As % of age 1926	As % of age 1981
3-4	56,273	6,700	2.8	4.90
5-9	115,579	97,058	19.8	27.80
10-14	79,004	173,516	39.1	50.80
15-19		166,549	27.6	51.00
20-24	131,409	110,561	13.4	40.00
25-34		156,760		32.80
35-44		108,091		30.00
45-54	85,149	85,184	15.1	28.30
55-64		66,209		22.90
65+	67,927	47,785	25.0	13.00

From Hindley (1990) p.27 & 34

Irish speakers among the age group 20-44 had increased from thirteen to thirty-three percent. Only among the over sixty-fives was there a decline in the number of people willing to identify themselves as Irish-speakers.

Religious Identity in the Irish State

The nineteenth century saw first the removal of legal penalties associated with membership of the Roman Catholic Church (1829) and later the dis-establishment of the Church of Ireland (1869).[100] The nineteenth century was a period of religious revival and competition in many states and increasing sectarian rivalry was a feature of Irish society.[101] The nineteenth century also witnessed the growth of the organisational coherence of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland and the emergence of the bishops of that Church as a powerful elite group:This organisational development was accompanied by a "Romanisation" process in

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100 For an account of these events see Lyons, FSL, (1985) Ireland Since the Famine, London, Fontana, pp17-25. Foster, R.F. (1989) Modern Ireland, 1600-1972, London, Penguin, pp296-307. The Penal Laws of the nineteenth century had inhibited Catholic land ownership, had prohibited Catholic entry into most of the higher pofessions, had taken away the Catholics right to vote and prohibited Catholics being members of Parliament. In short the Penal Laws radically reduced the social and economic status of the Catholic population. See Atkenson, D.H. (1988), p22-23. The affaccinating into the society of later nineteenth century Ireland and the interplay with British politics see, Conor, C. O'Brien, (1992), the Great Melody:Athematic Biography of Edward Burke, London, Sinclair-Stevenson.

101 The Nineteenth century religious revival is reviewed, and Irish experience put in that context, in Fahey, T. (1983) 'Catholicism and Industrial Society in Ireland1 in Goldthorpe & Whelan (eds), p241-263. For sectarian conflict in nineteenth in Ireland see Connolly, S. Religion and Society in Nineteenth Century Ireland, Dundalk, Dundalgan Press, esp pp18-30.

which the ritual, devotional practices and clerical norms become progressively less idiosyncratic to Ireland and more in line with the procedures and practices as advocated by Rome.[102] The successful manner in which an organisationally competent church elite managed their links with the mobilisation of Catholic people on issues of the Union, and land and related economic issues, as well as on issues of language is, on the one hand complex, and on the other hand, the origin of most of the dilemmas which confronted Irish society in the twentieth century. Much of our examination of twentieth century dilemmas, then, will seek for an understanding of the bias relationship in the events of the nineteenth century.

Focusing on the twenty-six county state as the unit of aggregation, the Roman Catholic population has fluctuated from 3.4 million in 1881, to 2.7 million in 1926, to 3.2 million in 1991. As a percentage of the twenty-six count population, Roman Catholics were 89.5% in 1881, 92.6% of the population in 1926, 94.6% and 91.6% in 1991.

The total Protestant population has dropped from 391,734 or 11.3% of the population in 1888, to 107,423, or 3.3% of the population in 1991. The largest drop took place for the years 1911-1926 (104,154), suggesting that the establishment of the Free State triggered a major exit among Protestant people. Akenson (1988) identifies 1922 as the critical year. That year marked the independence of the twenty-six county state and *'two sets of violent events'*.[103] In the 'Belfast pogroms' approximately two hundred Catholics were killed by Protestants, and about one hundred Protestants were killed by Catholics, and up to 9,000 Catholics were driven from their jobs, *"many of them in the skill-intensive and well-paid Belfast shipyards."*[104] The second violent event was a parallel campaign against Protestants in the South. Between December 1921 and March 1923, 192 houses and residences belonging to the Protestant minority in Southern Ireland were destroyed.[105] The "garrison exit" of soldiers and civil servants who left the Free State on the establishment of its independence contributed to the large drop in Protestant numbers between 1911 and 1926, But the scale of the exodus suggests that *"thousands of Protestants had decided they had no future in Ireland and had left."*[106] Buckland cites a *"most pathetic and symbolic instance of the new condition on the part of men hitherto unselfconsciously arrogant"*, when on 12 May 1922 a deputation from the General Synod of the Church of Ireland including the Archbishop of Dublin and the Archbishop of

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102 Larkin, E. (1987) The Consolidation of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, 1860-1870. Dublin, Gill & McMillan. The career of Cardinal Cullen, Archbishop of Armagh, 1849-1852, Archbishop of Dublin, 1852-1878, is seen as pivotal in the romanisation and organisational development of the Roman Catholic Church in nineteenth century Ireland, pxix.

103 Akenson, D.H. (1988) Small Differences:Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1922, Dublin & Montreal, Gill & MacMillan and McGill - Queen's University Press, p3.

104 ibid, p4. No doubt these sectarian events had repercussions on the technical institutes and technical instruction committees in Belfast.

105 ibid. See Buckland, P (1972) Irish Unionism I the Anglo Irish and the New Ireland, 1885-1922, Dublin & London, Gill & MacMillan, p285 f.f.

106 Akenson, (1988) opcit. p4. Akenson judgement has been called into question in by Hogan (1983) who refers to "The Harkness of (his) judgements...together with a strident and often sniping tone", as exemplified in Akenson (1975) A Mirror to Kathleen's Face, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press. Hogan, "An Overview of the Educational Ethos", Crane Bag 7, 2, 1975, p41-50.

Cashel and prominent Protestant laymen "waited upon Collins (Minister for Finance and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Free State) and asked to be *"informed if they were to be permitted to live in Ireland or if it was desired that they should leave the country."*[107]

Walsh (1975) suggested two main reasons for Protestant population decline which continued since 1936:firstly the Protestant birth rate was lower than that of Catholics and secondly, that approximately 25% of Protestants have married Catholics. and during the first decades of independence most Catholics in Irish inter Church marriages committed themselves to having the children of these marriages brought up as Catholics.[108] Recent population statistics show that the rapid decline in the Protestant population of the Republic has been reduced. It may also be observed, following Fitzgerald (1995), that a significant proportion of Protestants may have begun to return themselves among the "Other Religion" or "No Information" categories utilised since 1961. In the period since 1961 the most dramatic changes in recorded religious affiliation is among the groups designated "Other Religions", "Stated" or "No Religion." The combined numbers of those who in 1991 Census state they have no religious affiliation (66,270) and those who provide "No information" (83,375) is greater than the number of members of the combined major Protestant groupings (197,423). It is difficult to interpret with any confidence the precise religious affiliation of those who provide no return on the census data: The designation "No religion" is explicit and shows a dramatic increase from 1.107 in 1961 to 66,270 in 1991. It can at least be said with some assurance of those who provide no information that they do not wish to use religious affiliations as a personal identity mark and, to that extent, are disaffiliated from religious groupings. If we accept this reading, and aggregate "No Religion" and "No Information" groups in the 1961-19991 census - as "Disaffiliated", then that aggregate category has grown from 0.24% of the Republic's population in 1961 to being 4.24% in 1991. This would suggest that the "Disaffiliated" group have come to be more significant numerically than the Protestant population in the Republic.

In summary, a number of general points may be made in respect of the demography of religious cleavage in the Irish Republic. Firstly, the state has been overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, to the order of about 90% since Independence. Secondly, the Protestant population, declined, dramatically (by about one third, in the first decade of the state, and steadily since then). There is some evidence that the decline is less accentuated since 1971. Thirdly, since 1961 there has been a minor but significant growth in the number of those who do not wish to be identified primarily by religious affiliation.

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107 Buckland (1972) opcit. P288.

108 This was required under the terms of the Vatican decree 'Ne Timere' (1908) which was vigorously implemented by Catholic clergy in Ireland up to the 1960's. See Akenson (1988) opcit. p113-114, also Dudley-Edwards, O. (1970) 'The Sins of Our Fathers:Roots of Conflict in Northern Ireland, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan, p190, ff. Fitzgerald, G. 91995) The Positive Side of being Protestant in the Republic, Irish Times, 25/11/1995.

Religious Practice

> *Ireland is unusual in having a large majority; not just of Catholics, but of committed and practising Catholics*
>
> J.H. White (1980) p.4.

> *Our images of the traditional Irish Catholic are of docile, devout, faithful Mass-goers with rosaries in pockets, respectful of clergy and religious, taking in the parish mission and a few novenas every year. This indeed is the prototype of the good Catholic familiar to the oldest members of the population and the dominant type in the first six decades of this century*
>
> Maire Nic Ghiolla Phadraigh (1995), p.395

John Whyte's standard text on the 'Church in Ireland' was first published in 1971.[109] At that date most of the evidence about religious practise in Ireland was non-quantitative, based on the observations of a range of domestic and outside social commentators. Among these were Horace Plunkett (1904), an Irish Protestant, 'whose comments on Irish Catholicism mingled praise with criticism',[110] who observed in 1904, "In no other country in the world. probably, is religion so dominant an element in the daily life of the people as in Ireland", and Louis Paul-Dupois (1908) "No one can visit Ireland without being impressed by the intensity of Catholic belief there and by the fervour of its outward manifestations."[111] In 1955, the hostile Paul Blanshard, described the Irish Republic as "the world's most devoutly Catholic country: [112] A more recent and less critically disposed American Donald Connery, writing in 1968 had this to say:

> *The impression of total catholicism can begin on the flight to Dublin, for if it is an Aer Lingus plane it will be named after a saint. There may be several priests or nuns among the passengers and then in the capital there are more to be seen on the streets, and in the shops and restaurants. There appear to be churches at every turn, but this may only be because the Irish churches (Catholic churches, at any rate), are busy places, with people moving in and out at all hours, week-days and Sundays .....*

A visitor to Ireland notices that the bookshops are full of

> *religious works and that Catholic publications are thick on the newstands...Volunteers of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and other Catholic charities collect contributions on the streets. The newspapers tell of the thousands of pilgrims who have climbed Croagh Patrick or the hundreds flying off to Lourdes and other holy places on special pilgrimage flights.*[113]

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109 Whyte, J.H. (1980) Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-1979, Dublin Gill & MacMillan, (2nd Edition) first published under the title Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-1970.

110 Quoted in Whyte, (980), opcit. p4.

111 Plunkett, (1904) Ireland in the New Century, p94 and Paul-Dupois, L. (1908) Contemporary Ireland, p492-3, both quoted in Whyte (1980) opcit. p4-5.

112 Blanshard, P (1955) The Irish and Catholic Power:an American Interpreation, London, Verschoyle, p27.

113 Connery, D. The Irish, p130, quoted in Whyte (1980) opcit. p5

The earliest systematic quantitative research referred to in the literature is a 1964 report quoted as having found "*almost one hundred percent of the Catholics in the villages and rural areas studies were weekly or more frequent mass-goers*",[114] and a 1959 survey of mass-goers in the city of Limerick, quoted in the same source, claimed that "*almost all bound by the law of the church to attend mass appeared to do so.*"[115] In 1974 Nic Ghiolla Phadraig, published the results of a national survey of religious beliefs, values, attitudes and practice, carried out in 1974 as part of a Research and Development Unit established by the Catholic Hierarchy in 1970.[116] This was followed by a survey among university students and reported in Inglis (1980). This empirical and quantitative work has been supplemented by the Irish Report of the 1981 European Value Systems Study (Fogarty, Ryan & Lee, 1984), and its successor the 1990 European Values Survey reported in Whelan, (eds.), 1994, and [MacGreil (1991)[117] These later works have allowed for Irish norms to be compared with those in other countries and to be compared over time. The further replication of the 1981 European Studies in fifteen other countries (Inglehart 1990: 181) provides an even wider comparative framework for Irish practices.[118]

By the time that the religious behaviour of Irish Catholics came to receive systematic scrutiny the patterns established in the 19th century had begun to change. In making sense of this change, still (dramatically[119]) underway, social historians consistently identify the mid-nineteenth century as the critical period. For some the characteristic features of Irish Catholicism were the result of an opportunistic imposition of a Roman led, hierarchic, clericalist, legalistic and sexually repressive form of church on a people, who, after the famine, were socially and psychologically vulnerable. It is suggested that the pre-famine Irish had a very different relationship with the Catholic church, with a well-off urban minority attending mass and the majority expressing the spiritual dimension of their lives through

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114 Whyte (1980) opcit. p6. references these studies as cited in Ward, C.K. (1964) "Socio-religious research in Ireland" in Social Compass (X1, 3: 4, 1964, pp 25-29).

115 ibid. Interestingly, Whyte adduces evidence from the significantly lower levels of religious observance among emigrants which suggests that "the Catholicism of the Irishman is internalised only to a very slight degree." p6. quoting Jackson (1963) The Irish in Britain, London.

116 Nic Giolla Phadraig, M. (1976) 'Religion in Ireland; Preliminary Analysis', Social Studies, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp 113-179. For the establishment of the Research and Development Unit see Inglis, T. (1980), "Dimensions of Irish Students' Religiosity', The Economic and Social Review, Vol.11, No. 4, pp 237-256. Nic Giolla Phadraig and Inglis were both professional staff with the Episcopal Unit when the projects reported were undertaken. See also Breslin, A. & Weafer, J. (1985) Religious Beliefs Practice and Moral Attitudes:A Comparison of Two Irish Surveys, 1974-1984, Maynooth Council for Research and Development, Report. No. 21.

117 Fogarty, M., Ryan, L, and Lee, J. (1984) Irish Values and Attitudes:The Irish Report of the European Value Systems Study, Dublin, Dominican Publications, and Whelan, C.T. ed, (1994), Values and Social Change in Ireland, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan, see especially Hornsby-Smith, M.P & Whelan, C.T., 'Religious and Moral Values', pp7-41 MacGreil, M (1991) Religious Practice and Attitudes in Ireland, Report of a Survey, 1988-89, Maynooth, St. Patrick's College.

118 Inglehart, R. (1990) Culture Shift in Advance Industrial Society, Princeton, Princeton University Press, pp 177-211. The Inglehart extension of the Values studies is known as the World Values Survey 1990-91. See also Therborn, G. (1995). European Modernity & Beyond:The Trajectory of European Societies 1945-2000, London, Sage. pp275-281, where analyses based on this data is presented.

119 'Dramatically' here refers to the outcomes of the Referendum to permit divorce under the Constitution of the Irish Republic, on 24/22/95. The proposal to permit divorce was carried by 49.7% - 50.3% of the poll.

a rich folk culture of prayers during everyday activities, and of religious patterns (celebrations) and shrines which took place largely without the assistance of clergy who were not very numerous in any case.[120]

The Famine deaths and emigrations were mainly of the unchurched poor. This provided space for the 'devotional revolution' under the aegis of Cullen, Archibishop of Dublin which recast Irish religious and moral norms in strict accordance with Roman precepts which conveniently served the interests of the town middle classes and the tenant farmers who now possessed the vacated lands. This thesis which has its origins in the historical work of Larkin (1972) is supported by Connolly (1985) and Miller (1972) and is incorporated into the analyses of contemporary sociologists like Nic Giolla Phadraig, (1995) Inglis (1985) and Fahey (1989). This presentation is vigorously contested by Church historians, Corish, (1981, 1985) and McGrath (1990)[121] who present a thesis of a longterm evolution - "the Tridentine Evolution of Modern Irish Catholicism", 1563-1962 in which the church developments of the nineteenth century are "*the tail-end of the Tridentine renewal [in Ireland] which had been taking place strongly from 1775, which was accelerated by the Famine and which had become almost fully institutionalised by c.1875. The period 1875 to Vatican II in 1962 witnessed the triumphant expression of the Tridentine ideal in Ireland.*"[122] In this presentation, the nineteenth century saw the flowering of a long cultivated counter-reformation church with its clerical disciplines, its strongly hierarchical organisation, and its church-centred devotions which took their form from European or Continental (rather than specifically Roman) Counter-Reformation Catholicism.[123] It is clear that further detailed studies of nineteenth century religious practices at local and diocesan levels will be needed to arbitrate on the relative merits of the interpretative frames being put forward. Foster (1990) and Hoppen (1989) merge the positions to present a picture in which both a longterm evolution and re-organisation of Catholic discipline together with an accelerated organisational firmness in the mid nineteenth century church was made possible by social, political and economic changes.[124]

Whatever about the processes by which it became so, institutional Catholicism and adherence to its rules and regulations as outlined in the 'penny catechism', the 'Catechism of Catholic Doctrine' or "little green

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120 Nic Giolla Phadraig, (1995), opcit. p595.

121 Larkin, E. (1972) 'The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850-1875' in American Historical Review, (xxxvii, No. 3, pp625-52); Miller, D.W. (1975) 'Irish Catholicism and the Great Famine' in Journal of Social History, IX, I, pp81-95, and Connolly (1985) opcit. Fahey (1989) 'Catholicism' and Industrial Society in Ireland in Goldthrope and Whelan eds, opcit. pp241-263. See also Hynes, E. (1978). The great hunger. The alternative interpretation is to be found in Corish, PJ. (1981) The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Dublin, Helicon, Corish, PJ. (1985), The Irish Catholic Experience, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan and McGrath, T.G. (1990) The Tridentine Evolution of Modern Irish Catholicism, 1563-1962, a Re-examination of the 'Devotional Revolution Thesis, in O'Muiri, R. (ed). Irish Church History Today, Armagh, Armagh Diocesan Historical Society.

122 McGrath, (1990) opcit. p97.

123 ibid. pp94-97.

124 See Foster (1988) opcit. pp337-344 and Hoppen (1989) p64-71. Hoppen cites a number of contemporary commentators who complain of the stronger discipline and organisational features of the mid nineteenth century church as "the priests...inclining much to Protestant notions, and putting and end to all...venerable old customs." Gaelic scholar, John O'Donovan, in 1837, cited in Hoppen, opcit. p66.

book", (which changed little from the mid-nineteenth century until the end of the 1960's), became the dominant form of religious behaviour in contemporary Ireland.[125] The catechism of Catholic Doctrine contained the Six Commandments of the Church learned by rote by every Catholic child attending primary school:[126]

First:	*To hear Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation*
Second:	*To fast and abstain on the days appointed*
Third:	*To confess our sins at least once a year*
Fourth:	*To receive worthily the Blessed Eucharist at Easter time*
Fifth:	*To contribute to the support of our pastors*
Sixth:	*To observe the marriage laws of the Church*

Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, 1951, p.67

While each commandment was to be obeyed under pain of mortal sin, the most frequently used indicator in empirical studies of church commitment relates to the first of these "commandments" re church attendance. Church attendance is higher in the Republic then in any comparator country - this is true whether it is the total populations being compared, or just the Catholic populations. The data provides evidence of change, albeit slight, over time in the levels of church going. In 1974, 91% of Irish Catholics attended church at least once a week and complied with the first church commandment. In 1981 the figure was 87%, and in 1990, 85%.[127] These figures compare with 30% average level of church attendance among a range of European countries, and 50 % in Northern Ireland.[128] The extended World Values survey shows the same general picture. In all age groups, the percentage of those who attended religious service at least once a month is double the mean for sixteen comparator countries.[129] This data shows very strong religious practices in Ireland and little evidence of significant change. However, data from MacGreil (1991) and Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994) which looks at the 1981 and 1991 data by age group pin point definite trends of change in church attendance. A recent survey of student church attendance (Doherty & Pringle, 1995) also shows the significant differences between groups with differing religious affiliation.[130] A significant cultural shift is detected among those under the age of thirty-five in 1990.[131] Multivariate analysis of church attendance figures for 1990 European Values Survey prompt Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994) to conclude that evidence of secularisation in Irish society is reflected in lower church attendance of

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125 *Inglis, (1980) opcit. p24.*

126 *Catechism of Catholic Doctrine (1951) Dublin:Gill, p67, and quoted in Inglis (1980) p24-25.*

127 Fahey (1989(p258, and Hornsby-Smith & Whelan(1984),p21

128 From Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994) p21, European Countries included in 1990 Survey: France, Great Britain, West Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Belgium, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland

129 Inglehart (1990) p200. Table 6-14. 'Church Attendance in Sixteen Societies by Age Group:Countries include Denmark, Japan, France, Britain, W. Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Hungary, Canada, Italy, Spain, U.S., South Africa, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland.

130 Doherty, P, Pringle, D. (1995), 'Religious Attendance in Ireland' in Studies, Vol. 84, No. 335, Autumn 1995, pp278-291.

131 Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994) p23.

men, the young, those in urban areas, and those with third level education. Age and urban residence have the strongest effects on church attendance as surveyed in 1990.[132]

According to data on traditional religious beliefs,[133] in the European Values study, Irish people on aggregate (both Northern Ireland & Republic) are significantly more traditional than all other European countries, and these relative positions hold even for the younger age cohorts.[134] However, while displaying comparatively high levels of belief in God and high levels of religious practice, Irish Catholics are currently no more confident about the moral and social authority of churches as institutions than their European counterparts. Late twentieth century Irish Catholics are much less distinctive in their confidence in churches having adequate answers to a range of contemporary problems In respect of the 'problems of family file', 'the moral problems facing the individual' and 'the social problems facing the country', there is as little confidence in their church among Irish people as there is among other Europeans. [135] This, together with the decline in church-going among younger age groups, indicates that the norms of institutional religion no longer hold a 'moral monopoly' (Inglis 1987), but that a significant 'cultural shift' (Inglehart 1990) has occurred in recent decades. Central to this shift is a lessening of the capacity to the church to influence social and political priorities

Religious Personnel

The ratio of Irish Catholics per priest has been the subject of comment from the beginning of the century, (see above p.127). In 1981, the ratio was one of the lowest in the world at one priest per 978 Catholics, compared, for example, to 1: 1,445 in France and 1: 1398 in Italy. When other religious personnel (nuns, brothers and members of religious orders) were included in the calculation the Irish ratio was 1: 174.[136] This level of staffing allowed an intensive level of interaction between church and people. In 1973/74, nearly half of the homes in the country had been visited routinely by a priest in a six-month period.[137] The level of 'surveillance' made possible by the high numbers of religious and clerics, and their free access to the homes of Irish Catholics is used to explain the high level of institutional adherence among Irish Catholics. Inglis (1987) has argued that the moral power (and the related socio-political power) of the Irish church has been dependent on the detailed knowledge of the behaviour of parishioners made possible by such familiarity.[138]

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132 ibid. p28-29.
133 In traditional Christian religious belief in God, Life after death, a soul, The Devil, sin, Resurrection of the Dead, and Heaven.
134 Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994) p33,39
135 Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994)
136 Inglis (1987), p41
137 ibid. p43
138 ibid. p42.

The involvement of the churches in the provision of health and education services provided further access to the details of people's lives. But the period since 1970 has seen a significant reduction in the personnel resources of the Catholic church in Ireland. In 1970, 750 persons presented themselves for entry to full-time religious life: in 1989 the figure was 322. By 1989 the numbers of religious were being reduced by 470 each year through death ad departures.[139] A significant net reduction in personnel was underway. In primary and secondary schools, an even more dramatic exodus was underway. 750 members of religious orders left the primary teaching profession in the 1980's, while only 100 entered. In secondary schools, 821 left while 181 entered the profession. The ratio of religious to lay people in secondary schools slipped from 17.9% in 1980, to 7.3% in 1993.[140] In this context of declining and ageing personnel, it has been difficult for the Catholic Church to maintain its influence on the behaviour of Irish people. The survey data suggests that between 1981 and 1991, there has been ' *no overall change in the level of belief in traditional Christian values and religiosity, a modest decline in confidence in the church, a significant increase in permissiveness and a modest strengthening of civic morality*'.[141] Significantly also, there have been changes in the ' *values it is considered important to learn* ' (Hornsby-Smith & Whelan 1994), with less importance being attached to 'Social conformity' and an increase in emphasis on 'Success Orientation' and personal judgement.[142]

The picture is one of change from the early decades, 1930—1960, when church influence in Irish life was such that the '*Catholic code was enshrined in the law of the state*'. (Whyte, 1980), to a weakening of the 'moral monopoly'. The continuing strength of religious practice and spiritual values (as evidenced in the European Values Survey data) makes it difficult to describe the process as secularisation. There is, however, a significant reduction in the social significance of church organisations in the life of the state over the period in question.[143] The Catholic population is less confident in Catholic solutions to social issues and have developed both liberal and individualistic value sets.[144] These changes are particularly evident in relation to marriage and family issues, and in relation to work values.[145]

Cultural Ethno-Nationalism And Education

Identity in the twenty-six county Irish state has had to take account of three mutually reinforcing cleavages - ethnic cleavages, language cleavages and religious cleavages. As we have seen in the section on the Irish language, the formal state policy was designed to eliminate the basis of this cleavage by using the

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139 From Irish Times, 5/6/1992, cited in Hussey (1993), 376.
140 Information supplied by the Conference of Religious in Ireland, Education Secretariat, to the author.
141 Hornsby-Smith & Whelan (1994), p31.
142 ibid. p37-38.
143 ibid. p43-44.
144 See Whelan & Fahey (1994), *'Marriage and the Family'* and Whelan (1994) *'Work Values'* in Whelan, C.T., (eds.) Values and Social Change in Ireland, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.

schooling system to revive Irish as a vernacular in everyday use by all citizens. We have briefly sketched the progress and the outcomes of that policy over the period in question. We have noted the residual but significant presence of the language in the general culture and a continuing, if diminished, centre-stage location for the language in the schooling system. By the 1990's religious cleavages on the southern state are no longer presented to be a basis for political cleavage[146]. They are however strongly argued as justifying separate schooling systems[147]. We have examined some details of religious cleavages as a context for the vocational education system. Here, it is proposed to examine briefly the extent to which conceptions of identity were communicated through the education system, other than through the organisation of the system on denominational lines.

Were it available, data from ethnographic studies in Irish schools would yield interesting material pertinent to this issue. Such studies are very rare.[148] Two studies which examine the manner in which history has been presented in Irish schools are of particular interest and value in this context. Mulcahy (1980) examined the concept of Ireland as portrayed in the Intermediate Certificate textbooks. Coakley (1994) examined primary school history textbooks as a source for the changing response of the "southern Irish political elite" to changing relationships between the major groups on the island[149]. Coakley suggests that the history texts analysed fall into three clearly defined time frames: [150] Firstly, those published from the beginning of the century - up to 1967. These texts were strongly nationalist (Irish-Ireland) in tone and showed little variation in nationalist intensity. Secondly, texts published in the early 1970's, which were more vividly illustrated (in keeping with the new child centred approach recommended in documentation from the Department of Education) and less nationalist in tone. The third group, published in the mid-1980's entailed more project work, abandoned the chronological approach, and were "*significantly less nationalist in tone*"[151]. These findings confirm the view expressed by many participants in the academic and journalistic exchanges on "*Revisionism*" in Irish history, that the academic re-interpretations among

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146 A Church of Ireland publication in 1994 states "*We are Irish. Our goal is to relate Christian discipleship to the real needs of this land, to be committed to its people and its culture, and to order our church life here independently of external authority.*" Dr. Martin Manseragh, stated recently of the Church of Ireland of which he is a prominent member:"*Institutions associated with the Church of Ireland tradition, such as Dublin University, national hospitals and the Irish Times had all since put their tradition into the service of the Irish people as a whole, in many cases symbolised by the fact that they now have or will have for the first time in their histories, a Catholic master, provost or editor*" reported in The Irish Times, Nov. 10th, 1994.

147 *See submission of church groups to Education Convention 1994. The significance of the religious cleavage as institutionalised in education is arguably of more import in the context of all-island ethnic relationships. See O'Reilly, B. (1994) Politics and Economics and the Philosophy of Education in Ireland (forthcoming) and Irwin, C. (1994) 'The myths of segregation' in Gaelke, A. (ed) New Perspectives on the Northern Ireland Conflict, Aldershot:Ashgate, p104-119.*

148 The author is aware only of one:Torrode, B. (1980) unpublished mimeo 'Attitudes to Parental Involvement in the Education of Convent School Girls, in a South Eastern Irish Town', Dept. of Sociology, TCD. This paper covers a wider range of school experience than indicated in the title. Murray, d. (1985) Worlds Apart:Segregated Schools in Northern Ireland, Belfast:Appletree - an ethnographic study of schools in Northern Ireland, provides a model for the type of study that would be particularly useful.

149 Mulcahy, B. (1980) 'The Concept of Ireland as portrayed in the Intermediate Certificate History Textbooks", Coolahan, J. (ed) Proceedings of Education Conference 1980, Educational Studies Association of Ireland, p66-73 and Coakley, J. (1994) 'The Northern Conflict in Southern Irish school textbooks' in Gaelke, A. (ed) New Perspectives on the Northern Ireland Conflict, Aldershot:Avebury, p199-141. Coakley, a former teacher turned political scientist, presents the more analytical treatment, while acknowledging that the analysis relies on a "relatively subjective, impressionistic and qualitative approach to content analysis" (p134)

150 Coakley (1994) opcit. p126-127. Coakley examined the treatment of four topics - 'The Plantation of Ulster 1610, the outbreak of the rebellion of 1641; Ulster's resistance to Home Rule 1886-1914, and The Establishment and evolution of the state of Northern Ireland.

151 ibid. p127.

professional historians in time are reflected in the school texts.[152] Coakley, however, put the matter into sharper relief by presenting these shifts, together with changes in which the rhetoric of the state had been shorn of its shrill nationalism and even the annual commemorations of the rising (Easter, 1916) had been discontinued in the 1970's, as a phase in a dilemma "*in which nationalist movements commonly culminate*"[153].

Because it is informed by a broad-based comparative study of nationalism in a wide number of countries[154], Coakley's statement of the manner in which nationalism forms an influencing context for educational systems is worth quoting in full. It also provides a suitable note on which to conclude this survey of ethno-nationalist cleavages as a context for the vocational education system 1930-1990.

1. *An established political system is overthrown and a political counter-elite is swept to state power on an ambitious nationalist programme, typically on the creation of a new state.*
2. *This programme is not completely realized, but its full implementation becomes a priority for the new ruling elite, under pressure from its own supporters, on whom it depended in winning power. The elite uses the educational system - and especially the elementary schools - to propagate and reinforce the nationalist ideology which had legitimized its struggle for power and its full nationalist programme.*
3. *If the full nationalist programme is (or can be presented as having been) eventually implemented, the inculcation of nationalist ideology through the school system diminishes in importance or becomes redundant. It may either fade away or be formally discontinued or if the full nationalist programme is not implemented, and if this failure is generally perceived, existing nationalist ideology will in the longterm undermine the legitimacy of the state itself. In this case, a major shift in the content of the package of nationalist ideology being disseminated through the educational system will take place, coinciding with abandonment of the unattainable elements in the original nationalist programme.*[155]

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152 See for example Fennell, D. (1989) The Revision of Irish Nationalism, Dublin:Dublin Open Air, p71 and MacSiomain, T. (1994) 'The Colonised Mind - Irish language and Society', in O'Ceallaigh, D. (ed) Reconsiderations of Irish History and Culture, Dublin:Leirmheas p42-72, p68. Callan, P (1980) 'Irish History in Irish National Schools 1900-1907' in Coolahan, J. (1980) (ed) opcit. p26-35, examines an earlier and opposite shift of emphasis in respect of national identity in an early set o school texts.

153 Coakley, (1994) opcit. p120.

154 As evidenced in Coakley, J. (1992) The Social Origins of Nationalism.

155 ibid. p120-121.

PART 4

THE VEC SYSTEM IN DEVELOPMENT, 1930 - 1990

CHAPTER 7

Part I: DATA IN CONTEXT

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to present quantitative data on the development of the vocational education system in Ireland in the period 1930 to 1990. The data is drawn from official sources. The Chapter will present data on enrolment in wholetime courses and set this in relation to other (secondary school) enrolments, and with gender and labour/ economic characteristics. Though the VEC system has been organised on the basis of thirty-eight committee areas, and displays much local variation worthy of examination, such an examination is not part of this study. The data, therefore, has been aggregated at a system level and presented in series and in comparative settings which allow system level analyses. The presentation of this data, in this format, has not been undertaken in this manner in previous studies. Together with the archive searches, and the interview material, this data provides the basis for the conclusions presented in the study.

The Chapter is presented in two parts. In part one, data series on course provision and development over time are presented for continuation education, technical education and part-time courses. In part two, data on the labour market characteristics of VEC students are presented.

Before the Act

In 1926, the total enrolment in courses under the aegis of Technical Instruction Committees (precursors of the VECs), was 59,413. Almost 24,000 of these were enrolled in permanent centres or schools. The remainder were in temporary centres where the committees ran courses on an occasional to regular basis. These numbers suggest that the equivalent of 4.5% of the estimated labour force, or the equivalent of 3.6% of the population in the age group 15-64 were reached by the educational activities of the Technical Instruction Committees.[1] Table 7.1 presents the 1926/27 enrolment data.

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[1] From Department of Education Report, 1925/26/27, p170-171. The number of enrolments in schools, 23,976, represented 22,718 individuals as a number were enrolled on more than one course. If a similar situation applied in relation to other enrolments, the proportions would require some slight adjustment downwards. The total no. Enrolled: 59,413; Labour Force Estimate: 1,300,000 (from Kennedy et al (1988) p143); Total Population aged 15-65: 1,656966.-from 1926 Census of Population, CSO Databank Diskette H, Nov.1993, Dublin.

Table 7.1

1926/27 Technical Instruction Enrolment					
Course Title	**Schools**	**Courses**	**Total**	***% Excluding Irish.***	***% Including Irish.***
Domestic Science/Domestic Economy	6,521	6,409	12,930	*34%*	*22%*
Commerce	8,390	1,626	10,016	*26%*	*17%*
Science	4,251	0	4,251	*11%*	*7%*
Manual Instruction	0	3,942	3,946	*10%*	*7%*
Handicrafts	1,434	1,223	2,656	*7%*	*4%*
Other subjects	722	1,328	2,050	*5%*	*3%*
Introductory Courses	1,738		1,738	*5%*	*3%*
Art	920	0	920	*2%*	*2%*
Total	**23,976***	**14,528**	**38,507**	*100%*	*65%*
Irish		*20,909*	*20,909*		*35%*
Grand Total	23976	35,437	59,413		*100%*

*Source: Department Of Education Report 1925/26/27, p.170-171. * 22,718 individual enrolments*

The most striking matter, initially, in this data is the extent to which non-technical or cultural classes, i.e. classes in the Irish language, dominated. This cultural, and indeed political activity was considerably the largest single element in terms of individual enrolments in 1926, accounting for thirty-five percent of the total enrolments and for fifty-nine percent of the enrolment in classes outside schools. The numbers enrolled in Irish classes had in fact peaked in the previous year going from 23,000 in 1924 to 25,000 in 1925.[2] The enrolment data also suggest that the training needs of service employment dominated the provision being made. If classes in Irish are not taken into account then sixty percent of the enrolments are in commerce and domestic service related courses.[3] Manual Instruction and 'Introductory Courses', which may be conceived as relating to manufacturing employment,[4] together constituted only fifteen percent of the enrolments. The courses in Handicraft were, for the most part, related to home or 'cottage' industry, consisting of courses in spinning, lace-making and knitting.[5]

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2 No doubt the introduction of an amendment to the Technical Instruction Act, 1899 by the new Free State Government in 1924, The Local Government (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1924, permitting local authorities to levy one penny in the pound on the local rates to support the teaching of Irish by the Technical Instruction Committees was a significant factor here.
This cultural and political use of the system will be discussed in Ch.10.

3 In 1926, a total of 6,521 women took courses at schools in 'Domestic Science'. These were most likely taken in preparation for domestic service employment. Those enrolled in classes of 'Domestic Economy (6,409 in 1926) may have been more likely to be preparing for their own home-making duties. See Hearn, M. (1993) 'Below Stairs; Domestic Service Remembered in Dublin and Beyond, 1880-1922', Dublin:Lilliput Press, pp22-45.
The 'Introductory Course' was "to fit students to take up a specialised course of technical instruction" and included the following subjects: English, Mathematics, one or more of the following - Experimental Science, Drawing, Manual Training in Wood or Metal, Domestic Economy. Irish might also be taken as a subject. From 'Official Programme for Technical Schools and Classes as reproduced in Saorstat Eireann (1927) Commission on Technical Education Report, p162.

5 See Dept. of Education Report, 1925/26/27, p171.

Continuation Classes

Early Years

In 1929, the Department of Education prepared a memorandum for the Department of Finance in which they estimated the likely longterm development of the proposed system of continuation education contained in the draft Vocational Education Bill, then under consideration. The memorandum posited *'a general application of compulsory attendance at continuation schools'*.[6] While Part V of the Act as passed did grant the Minister powers to require compulsory attendance, this power was not invoked until 1938, and then on an experimental basis in Cork City only.[7] The experiment was extended to the four county boroughs of Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick in the years 1943-45.[8] For the remainder of the country, attendance at continuation classes was voluntary.[9]

Table 7.2

Continuation Education

Department of Education Estimates of Participation

As Submitted to Department of Finance, May 1929

Estimated 14-16 Age Group	**118,913**
Attending Primary School	32,162
Attending Secondary Sch.	12,750
Available	74,011
75% enrolment	**55,650**
Enrolment 1927/28(actual)	17,484

Source: Nat. Arch. DF, S84/13/29

The officials reasoned that if a total cohort of 118,913, 14-16 year- olds existed in the state, and if 32,162 of these currently attended primary schools, and another 12,750 of them were currently enrolled in secondary schools, then the total available clientele for continuation courses was 74,011. The maximum and indeed the optimum level of participation were thought to be 75% of the cohort, to allow the remainder service the youth labour market. Implicit in the manner in which the 1929 projections were calculated was an assumption that enrolments were stable. There would be no change in the numbers attending secondary schools and any increased school participation by 14-16 year-olds would be in the new vocational

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6,10 ibid. The memorandum was sent to Finance on 10/5/1929 with the heads of the proposed Bill and an accompanying letter from Seosamh O'Neill, Secretary of the Department of Education.

7 See Report of the Department Of Education, 1940-41, p36; this is the first of the Departmental reports to give an extended general review of the workings of the VEC system.

8 See Report of the Department of Education, 1943-4, p48-51.

9 The Minister introducing the Bill showed little enthusiasm for compulsion citing as a principle that he 'was always keen on... I cannot compel the attendance of anybody at any particular school'. Dail Debates, 20 May, 1930, Col.271.

education system. Additional places in secondary schools were not being planned for by the state. The numbers currently in receipt of secondary education was equal to, if not greater than the number from the population that were fitted to benefit from a secondary education.

The predictive value of the data used to make the case for the new system was, however, quite weak, as is illustrated by the figures for actual enrolments for the years 1932/33 to 1949/50. Table 7.4 shows the enrolments on the new continuation classes over that eighteen year period.[10] The rapid growth of the early years was not sustained over the period. The share of the estimated 14-16 cohort increased from four percent to thirteen percent, considerably short of the seventy-five percent used in the 1929 calculation of estimates for eventual enrolment. It is observable that the County or rural VECs grew at a faster rate than the City and Town schemes.

Over the period covered in the table, County schemes increased by 558% while the increase in City and Town Schemes was 374%. The period 1935 to 1944 were, by and large, ones of moderate expansion, and for some of the war years, of contraction in enrolments. During this time a capital programme continued and the number of what were now termed 'Vocational Schools', increased from 77 in 1931/32 to 206 in 1938/39.[11]

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10 There is some difficulty in applying the nomenclature to the statistics as published in the annual reports of the Department Of Education. For the purposes of the early period, the distinction between -16 and 16+ is used as a surrogate for the distinction between 'continuation' and 'technical' education. This is consistent with the terminology of the Act and the attendant debates; however the presentation of Departmental statistics would make the distinction appear of less significance than that between wholesome and part-time enrolments.

11 Reports of the Department of Education, Various Years.

Table 7.3

Continuation Classes for Pupils under 16 in VECs,1932/33 - 1949/50

Year	County	Town & City	Total	Percent Change	Est. of total 14-16yr.[12]	% of total 14-16 Yr.
1932	2175	1742	3917		110222	4%
1933	2874	2089	4963	27%	110222	5%
1934	3896	2126	6022	21%	110222	5%
1935	4226	2422	6648	10%	110222	6%
1936	4346	2512	6858	3%	110222	6%
1937	4840	2829	7669	12%	110222	7%
1938	5210	2853	8063	5%	110222	7%
1939	5482	3145	8627	7%	110222	8%
1940	5675	3150	8825	2%	102762	9%
1941	5596	3011	8607	-2%	102762	8%
1942	5135	3129	8264	-4%	102762	8%
1943	5339	3286	8625	4%	102762	8%
1944	5489	3351	8840	2%	102762	9%
1945	6053	3909	9962	13%	102762	10%
1946	6487	3826	10313	4%	102762	10%
1947	6981	3949	10930	6%	102762	11%
1948	7867	4578	12445	14%	102762	12%
1949	8818	4905	13723	10%	102762	13%

Source:Derived from Department of Education Reports, 1932/33-1949/50 & Central Statistics Office. Census Data.

VEC / Secondary Ratios

The assumptions made by the Department of Education in 1929 about the static nature of enrolment to secondary schools did not hold either. A steady growth in percentage terms actually occurred over the period. While the net change in VEC wholetime enrolments (aggregating wholetime students aged under 16 and those over 16 - wholetime Continuation and wholetime Technical enrolments) was an impressive ninety-six percent. Growth was from a relatively low base.

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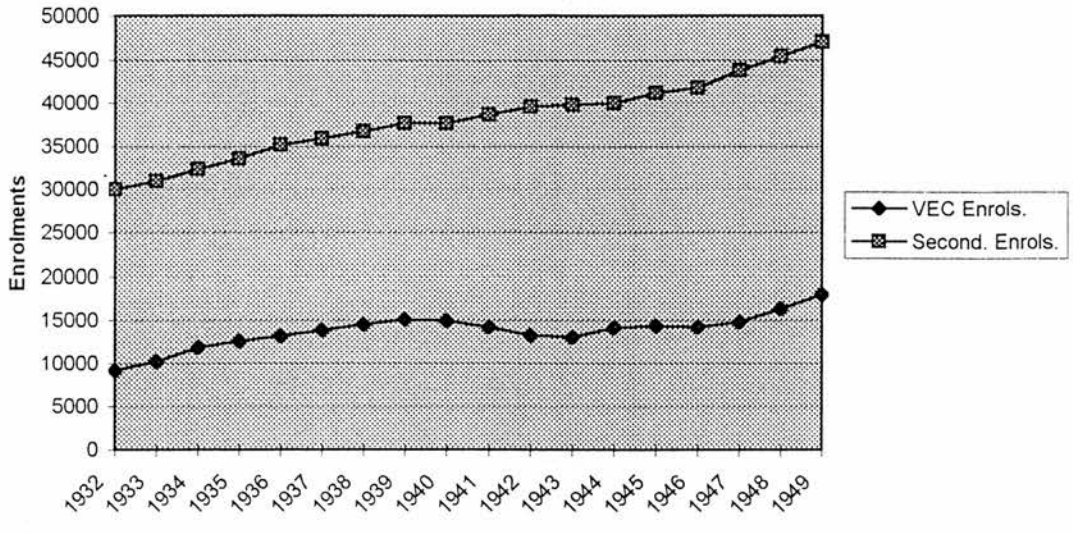
[12] The estimate of 14-16 yr. olds in the population has been based on the 1936 and 1946 Census data for persons in the age groups 10-14 and 15-19. The data for 1936 has been utilised as giving a basis for an approximation for the years 1932-1939; the data for 1946 has been used for the years 1940-1949. In both cases the figures for each group has been divided by five and the results added. The actual figures are as follows:

	10-14yrs	15-19 yrs	Estimate of 14-16 yr. olds.
1936	282,783	268,326	110,222
1946	262,328	251,487	102,762

Fig. 7.1
VEC and Secondary Wholetime Enrolments, 1932-49



Source:Department of Education Reports:Various Years

The actual increase was but 8,805 and less than half the increase of 17,061 that occurred in the secondary enrolments for the period. It is noticeable that secondary school enrolments were not as sensitive to the economic effects of the 1939-1945 war, with enrolment remaining static for only one year, and not declining in any year. This is in contrast to the quite significant decline in VEC wholetime enrolments during the war years, and particularly from 1941 to 1943/44. With the beginning of World War II (known in Ireland as *The Emergency*[13]) in 1939, wholetime vocational school enrolments went into decline. Employment opportunities, or indeed obligations, were presented to unskilled youths as part of the national programme to ensure self-sufficiency in fuel (through the harvesting of peat or turf) and in food, through increased tillage.[14] Though emigration to the U.S. was unsafe and virtually at a stand-still,[15] the young unskilled were attracted in large numbers by employment in the British war effort, in which wage rates were considerably higher than at home.[16] Matters became such that in 1942 government prevented the sons of farmers in some productive agricultural areas from emigrating, in order to make them available at controlled wages in the key areas of production. Wage rates fell by 30% between 1930 and 1943, due largely to a government 'stand-still' and the outlawing of strikes in support of wage increases.[17] In such a

13 O'Grada, C.(1997) 'A Rocky Road: The Irish Economy since the 1920s, Manchester: Manchester University Press, p7.
14 O'Hagan, (1991), p37.
15 ibid.
16 O'Grada, (1997), p18.
17 Ibid, p17. 'Between 1940 and 1945, 136,000 travel permits or passports were issued to men and 62,000 to women...'

milieu, the attractiveness of vocational education, and, no doubt, the perceived rates of return, was questionable.[18]

The end of the war provided a change in the relative costs and benefits. There was, in addition, a new, potentially marketable educational currency being made available through certification of the Continuation programmes in vocational schools.

Table 7.4

Vocational School and Secondary School Enrolments Compared

1932/33-1949/50

Year	VEC W/T-16	VEC W/T16+	VEC TOTAL	Second. Enrols.	Percent Change	VEC as % of Total
1932	3917	5256	9173	30004		23%
1933	4963	5265	10228	30966	3%	25%
1934	6022	5787	11809	32384	5%	27%
1935	6648	5949	12597	33577	4%	27%
1936	6858	6280	13138	35111	5%	27%
1937	7669	6149	13818	35890	2%	28%
1938	8063	6466	14529	36676	2%	28%
1939	8627	6436	15063	37670	3%	29%
1940	8825	6109	14934	37670	0%	28%
1941	8607	5577	14184	38713	3%	27%
1942	8264	4948	13212	39537	2%	25%
1943	8625	4400	13025	39787	1%	25%
1944	8840	5262	14102	40040	1%	26%
1945	9962	4360	14322	41178	3%	26%
1946	10313	3857	14170	41799	2%	25%
1947	10930	3841	14771	43780	5%	25%
1948	12445	3885	16330	45413	4%	26%
1949	13723	4255	17978	47065	4%	28%
%Change	**476%**	**-19%**	**96%**	**57%**		

Source: Department of Education Reports, 1932/33-1949-50

The Group Certificate Examinations

In 1942 a special committee established by the Irish Technical Congress, recommended the introduction of an examination system for the Continuation Courses. The examination was held for the first time in June 1947.[19] The examination was intended for students who had completed a two years' course in a whole-time day Vocational School. Examinations were held in five groups:

- A General Certificate in Commerce
- A Secretarial Certificate in Commerce

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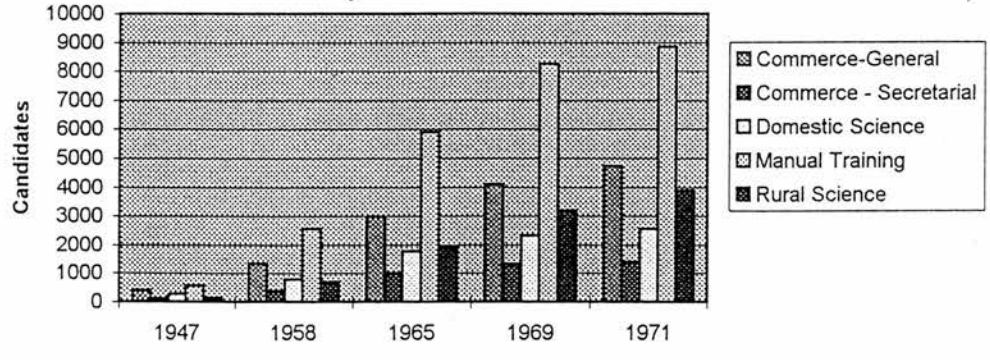
18 The pressures of educational politics on enrolment in continuation classes in Vocational schools is examined in Chapter 10.

19 See Department of Education Reports, 1940/41 to 1946/47.

- A Certificate in Domestic Science
- A Certificate in Manual Training
- A Certificate in Rural Science

In the first year of operation, 1,475 students entered for the examination and a pass rate of 49.4% was recorded. For the General Certificate in Commerce, known as the 'Commerce Group - General', candidates had to pass written tests in Book-keeping, Commercial Arithmetic and Commerce, and an oral test in Irish. Candidates for the Secretarial Certificate in Commerce, known as the 'Commercial Group - Secretarial', took Shorthand, Typewriting, Commerce and Oral Irish. The candidates could also select one or more of six optional subjects that were available, including English.[20] The structure was similar in the other groups. Core subjects for the Domestic Science Certificate were Cookery, Needlework, Laundrywork, and Household Management which were examined by practical tests and 'Tios' or 'Homecraft' which was examined by a written paper. To qualify for the Manual Training Certificate candidates had to pass practical tests in Woodwork or Metalwork, a written test in Mechanical Drawing, and the oral test in Irish. Again the option of one or more additional subjects was available for examination.[21] The Rural Science Certificate candidates were required to pass a practical test in either Woodwork or Metalwork and a written test in Rural Science, and the ubiquitous oral Irish test. The examination is reported on in Reports of the Department of Education for the first time in the 1946/47 edition. On that occasion there were a total of 1.475 candidates entered for the five Certificate groups. [22] By 1965 there were 1,398 candidates recorded.[23]

Fig. 7.2
Group Cert. Candidates, 1947-71
(Selected Years by Groups)



Source:Department of Education Reports:Various Years

From 1971 to 1980, the results are presented as individual subject, (e.g. Woodwork or Irish); candidates and groups not reported on. From 1980, no results for The Group Certificate examination appear at all. In

20 See Dept. of Education Report, 1946-47, p30-31.
21 ibid.
22 ibid.

1992, a new examination for lower secondary pupils, taken by all after three years of study, is taken for the first time. Here ends the Continuation programme of the VEC system, the last award of which was made in 1991 and unreported in the national statistics.

The post-war transition in Irish education had begun with the new examination. The introduction of this certification framework for the Continuation classes had the effect of making the vocational schools more attractive to potential students and more acceptable to employers. Following years of negative or little growth, the new examinations had a dramatic impact on enrolments in the years immediately following. It is instructive to examine the data in some detail. The following table compiled from Department of Education Annual reports presents the relevant statistical data for the period 1945-1965, during which the long gestation of change had begun.

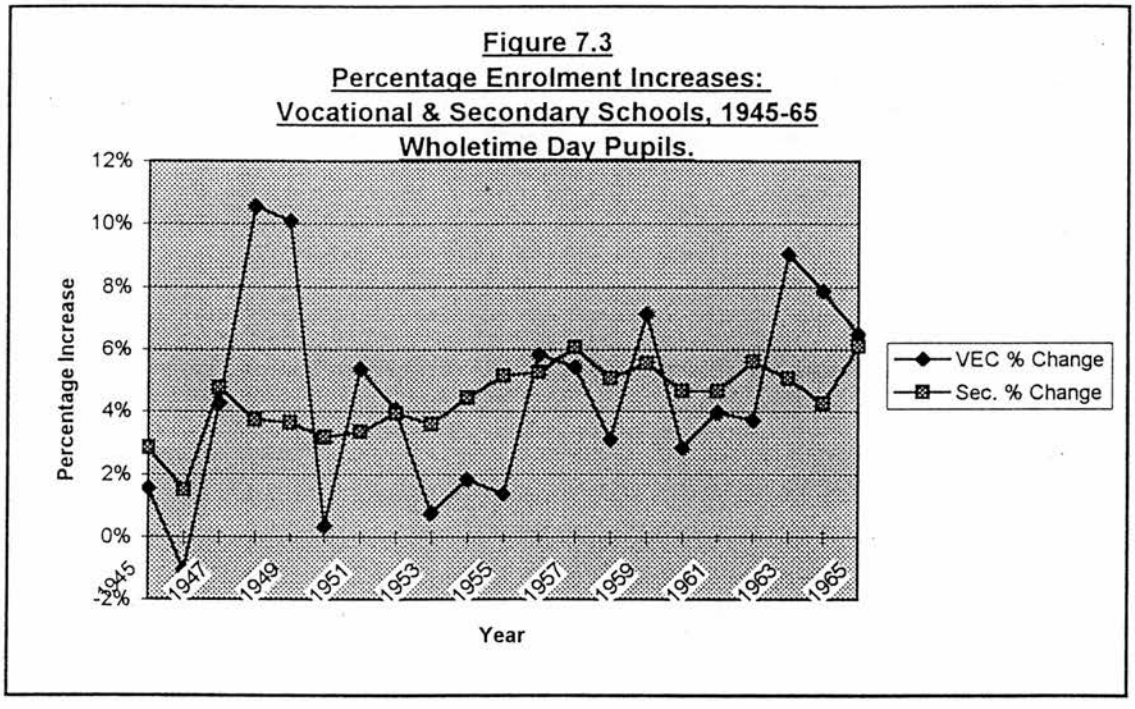
Table 7.5 Changing Post-Primary Enrolment, 1945-1965

Year	VEC Total	% Change	Secondary Total	% Change	Grand Total	Percent. Change	VEC as % of Total	Year
1945	14,322	2%	41,178	3%	55,500	3%	26%	**1945**
1946	14,170	-1%	41,799	2%	55,969	1%	25%	**1946**
1947	14,771	4%	43,780	5%	58,551	5%	25%	**1947**
1948	16,330	11%	45,413	4%	61,743	5%	26%	**1948**
1949	17,978	10%	47,065	4%	65,043	5%	28%	**1949**
1950	18,042	0%	48,559	3%	66,601	2%	27%	**1950**
1951	19,011	5%	50,179	3%	69,190	4%	27%	**1951**
1952	19,780	4%	52,151	4%	71,931	4%	27%	**1952**
1953	19,932	1%	54,019	4%	73,951	3%	27%	**1953**
1954	20,299	2%	56,411	4%	76,710	4%	26%	**1954**
1955	20,580	1%	59,306	5%	79,886	4%	26%	**1955**
1956	21,780	6%	62,429	5%	84,209	5%	26%	**1956**
1957	22,961	5%	66,221	6%	89,182	6%	26%	**1957**
1958	23,675	3%	69,568	5%	93,243	5%	25%	**1958**
1959	25,368	7%	73,431	6%	98,799	6%	26%	**1959**
1960	26,090	3%	76,843	5%	102,933	4%	25%	**1960**
1961	27,124	4%	80,400	5%	107,524	4%	25%	**1961**
1962	28,132	4%	84,916	6%	113,048	5%	25%	**1962**
1963	30,671	9%	89,205	5%	119,876	6%	26%	**1963**
1964	33,086	8%	92,989	4%	126,075	5%	26%	**1964**
1965	35,232	6%	98,667	6%	133,899	6%	26%	**1965**
% Change	**146%**		**140%**		**141%**			

Source: Department of Education Reports: Various Years

[23] See Report of the Department of Education for 1964/65, p64.

Over the twenty year period, 1945-65, the VEC and secondary schools systems grew by approximately the same ratio, 140-145%. The annual rate of increase in overall enrolment fluctuated between one and five percent in the years 1945-55. These overall rates are similar to the annual overall post-primary increases for the period 1932-45. The annual rates for the period 1955-65, however, fluctuate between four and six percent. This suggests that the earlier period belongs, in terms of overall social provision/demand, to the patterns of the pre-war years. The later period, 1955-65, shows an increasing social demand and indicates a significant pressure for provision. From 1932 to 1945, the number of secondary schools had increased from 306 to 474; the number of vocational schools had increased from 98 to 252. In the next ten years ninety new Vocational schools were built and 111 new secondary schools were built.[24] A closer look at the year to year increases in the two sectors is provided in Figure 7.3 below.



Source:Department of Education Reports:Various Years

Figure 7.3 illustrates a less stable overall pattern in the enrolment experience of the vocational schools. The untypical increases in 1947 and 1948 have already been commented on and have been associated with labour market pressures and the sharp increase in net out-migration in those years. In the context of this growth, the 'market share' of post-primary education remained almost static throughout the period - at

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24 Data from Department of Education Annual Reports, various years. The secondary schools built during this period were financed largely by non state - mostly church resources.

24 See Chapters 11-12 for an account of the internal tensions in the politics of Irish education linked to these increases in VEC share of enrolments. The figure of 27% is reached again in 1971 and 1972. The Community schools come into operation in 1973.

26%. The increase to a 27-28% following the introduction of the Group Certificate examinations turned out to be exceptional.[25]

The Sixties and Change

In the period after 1963, the distinction within vocational education between continuation education (for those under 16 years of age) and technical education (for those over 16) becomes more complex. More complex too, is the general post primary provision. Comprehensive schools are announced by Minister Hillery, which would combine the features of the vocational school curriculum of continuation and technical education, with the curriculum of the academic secondary school.[26]

The period 1965 to 1995, presents a contrast to the previous thirty years in every aspect of Irish life. In education, the change is most obviously discernible in the presence of new types of post-primary provision - the comprehensive and the community schools, as is evident from Table 9.5. Four new Comprehensive schools commenced provision in 1966. By 1974, there were fourteen Comprehensive schools and the model had been replaced by the 'Community school'. The first three Community schools opened in 1973, and by 1993 there were fifty-seven (57). In 1993, these new schools were jointly responsible for thirteen percent(13%) of post-primary provision.[27]

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26 Statement by Minister P.J. Hillery, 20th May, 1963.

27 Data from Dept. of Education Statistical Reports, for the relevant years. The 1993 number of comprehensive schools is sixteen.

Table 7.6: Changing Post-Primary Enrolment, 1965-93

Year	VEC Total	% Change	VEC as % of Enrol.	Com/Comp Total.	% of Enrol	Second-ary Total	% of Enrol.	Grand Total	Percent Change	VEC % of Growth	Year
1965	35,232	6%	26%	-	0	98,667	74%	133,899	6%		***1965***
1966	37,965	8%	27%	837	1%	103,558	73%	142,360	6%	32%	***1966***
1967	42,986	13%	26%	986	1%	118,807	73%	162,779	14%	25%	***1967***
1968	47,404	10%	26%	1,293	1%	133,591	73%	182,288	12%	23%	***1968***
1969	49,594	5%	25%	1,402	1%	144,425	74%	195,421	7%	17%	***1969***
1970	53,456	8%	26%	1,592	1%	150,642	73%	205,690	5%	38%	***1970***
1971	58,073	9%	27%	2,860	1%	157,234	72%	218,167	6%	37%	***1971***
1972	60,396	4%	27%	5,132	2%	162,161	71%	227,689	4%	24%	***1972***
1973	63,814	6%	26%	9,746	4%	167,309	69%	240,869	6%	26%	***1973***
1974	63,850	0%	25%	13,403	5%	175,633	69%	252,886	5%	0%	***1974***
1975	66,852	5%	25%	15,569	6%	184,465	69%	266,886	6%	21%	***1975***
1976	68,572	3%	25%	17,843	6%	190,494	69%	276,909	4%	17%	***1976***
1977	68,498	0%	24%	20,557	7%	194,372	69%	283,427	2%	0%	***1977***
1978	68,120	-1%	24%	22,356	8%	197,186	69%	287,662	1%	0%	***1978***
1979	66,734	-2%	23%	24,723	8%	199,607	69%	291,064	1%	0%	***1979***
1980	68,811	3%	23%	26,806	9%	201,316	68%	296,933	2%	35%	***1980***
1981	72,197	5%	24%	29,427	10%	204,456	67%	306,080	3%	37%	***1981***
1982	74,810	4%	24%	31,514	10%	206,248	66%	312,572	2%	40%	***1982***
1983	76,916	3%	24%	33,266	10%	208,909	65%	319,091	2%	32%	***1983***
1984	79,764	4%	24%	36,908	11%	212,789	65%	329,461	3%	27%	***1984***
1985	81,857	3%	24%	38,621	12%	214,704	64%	335,182	2%	37%	***1985***
1986	83,209	2%	25%	39,396	12%	215,955	64%	338,560	1.0%	40%	***1986***
1987	84,899	2%	25%	39,890	12%	214,798	63%	339,587	0.3%	100%	***1987***
1988	84,473	-1%	25%	40,488	12%	213,923	63%	338,884	-0.2%	61%	***1988***
1989	85,235	1%	25%	40,139	12%	213,788	63%	339,162	0.1%	100%	***1989***
1990	86,457	1%	25%	42,941	13%	213,047	62%	342,445	1%	37%	***1990***
1991	88,686	3%	25%	43,522	12%	216,740	62%	348,948	2%	34%	***1991***
1992	92,034	4%	26%	45,177	13%	221,167	62%	358,378	3%	36%	***1992***
1993	94,791	3%	26%	48,850	13%	224,035	61%	367,676	3%	30%	***1993***

Compiled by the author from Dept of Education Reports, Various Years[28]

Remarkably, the VEC sector share fluctuated only between a low of 23% and a high of 27% during this time. The overall increase in the period 1965-93 was of 175%, with an increase of 150% in the twenty year period 1965-85. Of the expansion that took place over the period, 54% was catered for by the secondary school system, 21% was catered for by the new Comprehensive schools and the later Community schools. The VEC schools catered for 25% of the increase. The rate of change was most dramatic in the first years of the period. In 1967 and 1968 the level of increase was between fourteen percent and twelve percent, overall, and between ten and twelve percent in the VEC sector. The economic background to these changes will be examined in Chapter 8.

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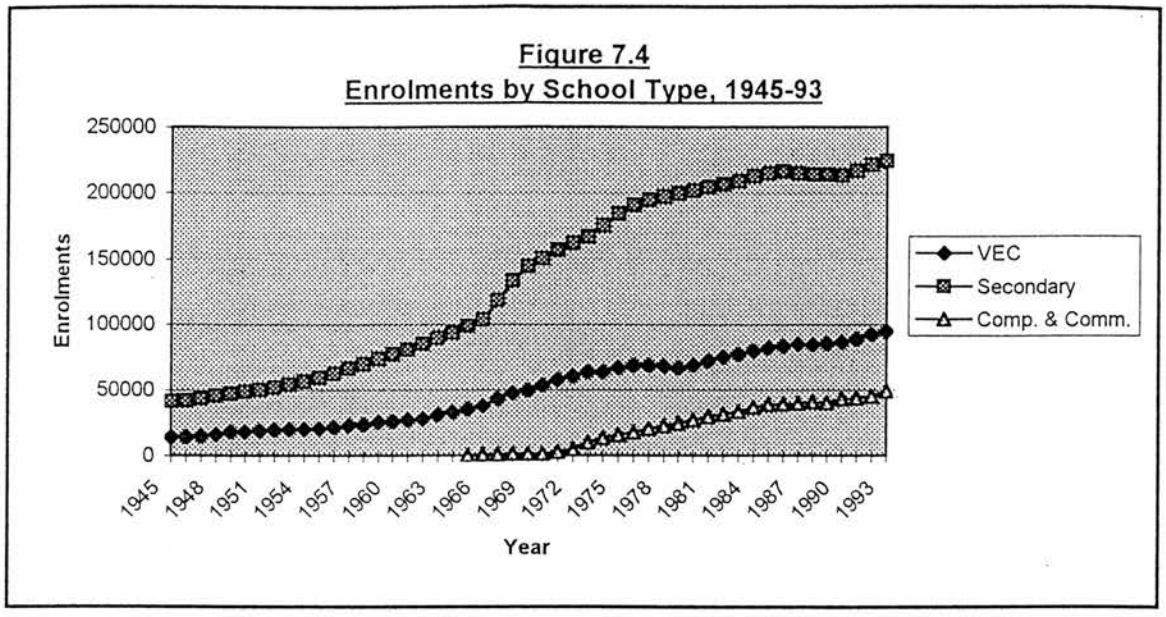
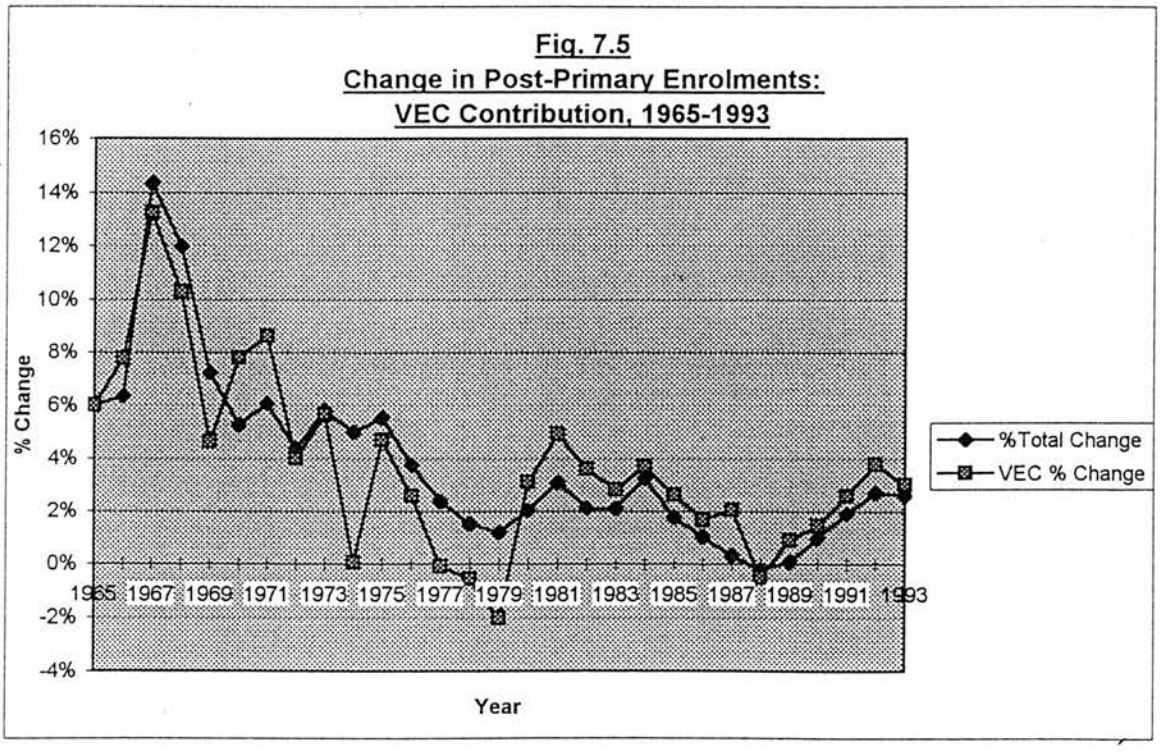
[28] The figures in this table are derived from aggregations presented in Table 1 of the relevant reports. Some minor discrepancies with returns elsewhere in the reports remain unexplained.



Source:Department of Education Statistical Reports:Various Years



Source:Department of Education Statistical Reports:Vaious Years

Technical Education- Enrolments

The attendance of young people over 16 years of age did not show a similar development to that in Continuation (-16) courses. This is evident from the data in Table 7.7. Overall, there was a decline of nineteen percent in the enrolments from the opening to the closing year used in the table, with an even stronger decline (of 36%) in the City and Town schemes

Table 7.7

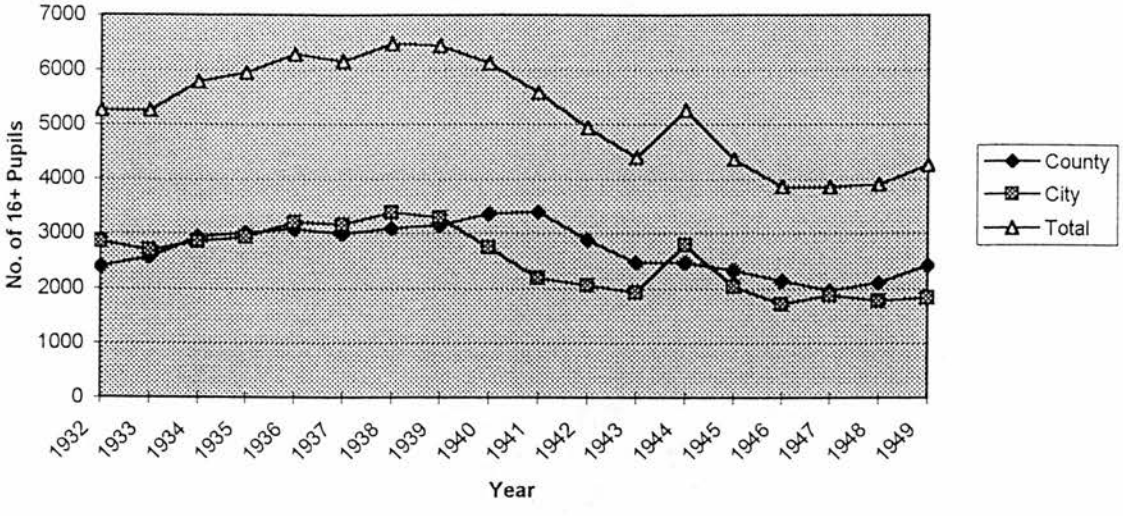
Enrolment of Whole time Technical (16+) Pupils in VECs 1932/33-1949/50

Year	County	City	Total	%Change
1932	2403	2853	5256	
1933	2566	2699	5265	0%
1934	2938	2849	5787	10%
1935	3021	2928	5949	3%
1936	3071	3209	6280	6%
1937	2996	3153	6149	-2%
1938	3086	3380	6466	5%
1939	3151	3285	6436	0%
1940	3363	2746	6109	-5%
1941	3393	2184	5577	-9%
1942	2888	2060	4948	-11%
1943	2471	1929	4400	-11%
1944	2467	2795	5262	20%
1945	2328	2032	4360	-17%
1946	2137	1720	3857	-12%
1947	1963	1878	3841	0%
1948	2108	1777	3885	1%
1949	2421	1834	4255	10%
%Change	1%	-36%	-19%	

Source: Derived from Dept of Education Reports, 1932/33-1949/50

The small overall increase discernible in the years to 1940, can be linked to the policy of 'native industrialisation' sponsored by the Fianna Fail administration in this period (see Chapter 5). In the following years, there in a decline in 16+ enrolments (with the exception of a minor surge in towns and cities, in 1944). The net position is a decrease in the enrolment of 16+ students over the period.

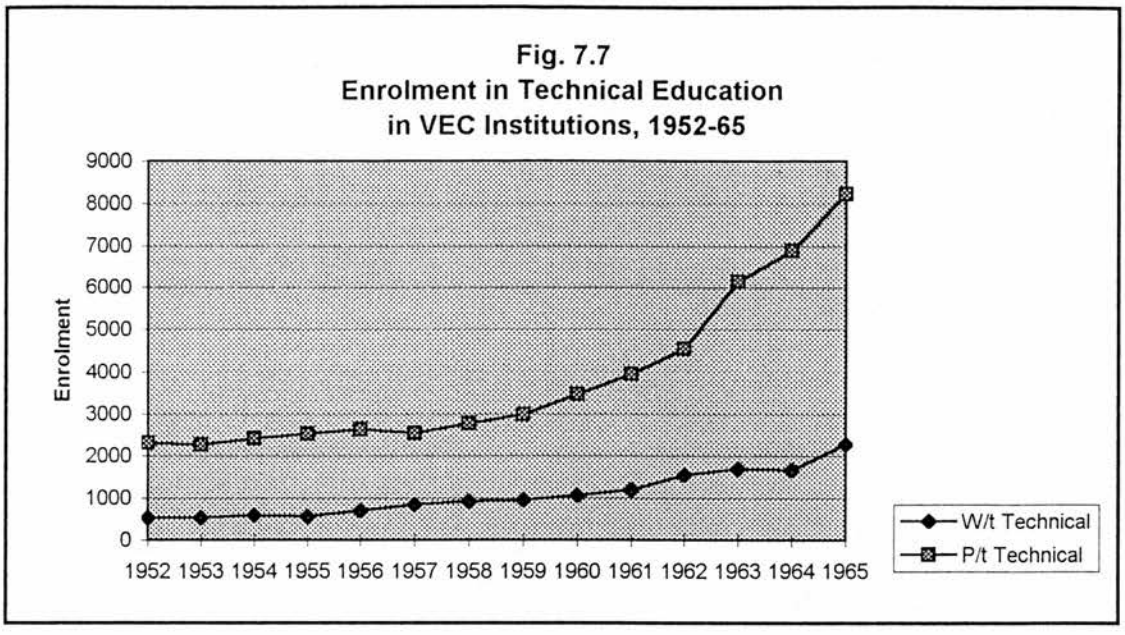
Fig. 7.6
Enrolments of Wholetime 16+ (Technical Education) Pupils in VEC Schools, 1932-49



Source:Department of Education Statistical Reports:Various Years

This data supports the view that the emerging dominant model of the new vocational school was that of the 'rural Vocational School'. The focus of developmental attention was the new programme of continuation education. In the following decade there is a change in the tabulation of VEC enrolments which separates those technical education classes in which students are enrolled on a wholetime basis from those in part-time technical courses. By the end of the 1950's, enrolments in part-time technical courses begin to grow more steeply. Whole time enrolments in technical courses, mostly in Dublin City and Cork City VECs, grow from 526 in 1952, to 954, in 1959. Figure 7.7 shows the more steady growth that occurred after 1959. By 1970, wholetime technical enrolments had reached 3,168.[29]

[29] Statistics collated by the author from Department of Education Statistical Reports, Various Years.



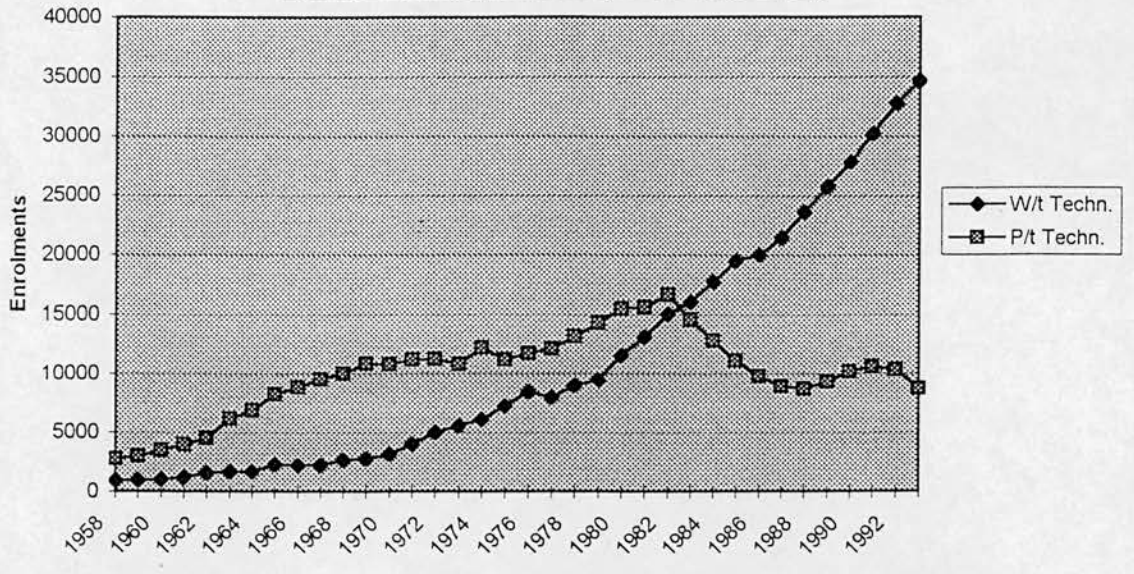
Source: Department of Education Statistical Reports: Various Years

Speaking to vocational teachers in 1958, the Minister for Education, Lynch, referred to the '*dearth of technicians*'. He suggested that all those in vocational education would give close attention to this field of activity, '*of growing importance to every country*'. For the Minister, modern developments in science and technology had created this need for '*... the man whose function lies somewhere between the skilled craftsman and the technologist or university graduate.*'[30] We have seen how whole-time technical education was tabulated for the first time in Department of Education statistical data in 1952 and how a progressive increase in both part-time and whole-time technical education was registered between 1952 and 1965.

(See Figure 7.7 above).

30 National Archives, GIS 1/234. Address of the Minister to 'Cumann na Muinteoiri Gairm-Oideachais', Killarney, 1/4/1959.

Fig. 7.8
Technical/Technician Education and Training in VEC System, 1958-93 (including RTCs)



Source:Department of Education

Sluggish growth began to change to a more rapid increase after 1958. The path of whole-time technical education development from 1974 is steep, moving from five the thirty-five thousand students in the twenty year period. Such a development was possible, in the first instance, by the development of courses in existing schemes such as City of Dublin, Cork, Limerick. The VECs in these areas made internal institutional adjustments to cater for the emergence of the new and developing demand. Dublin Institute of Technology was created by City of Dublin VEC and analogous arrangements were made in Limerick. Under central guidance a new set of institutions were established under the remit of VEC in eight locations in 1974. From 1958/59 to 1968/69, the number of students attending the three colleges of the National University of Ireland (at Cork, Dublin and Galway) plus Trinity College, Dublin, grew from 8,676 wholetime students to 16,913, or by almost 100%.[31] In 1968, a new minimum matriculation requirement stipulated that a minimum of two honours grades in the Leaving Certificate examination would operate for the first time[32]. The anticipated downward pressure on the numbers of applications for university places expected from this measure, was countered by the introduction of a student grants scheme concurrently.[33] Projecting an annual demand for 1,000 additional university places each year, the Higher Education Authority cited 'increasing affluence', and explosion in the number who completed secondary school, and the new situation where vocational schools as well as secondary schools were now sending pupils forward for the Leaving Certificate, as well as the introductions of free post-primary education in 1967, as the main

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31 The Higher Education Authority, First Report, 1968-69, Dublin:The Stationery Office, Appendix, 4, p60.
32 ibid, p12
33 ibid.

contributory causes.[34] The Higher Education Authority was established in 1968 on foot of a recommendation of the *Commission on Higher Education* (1960-67) with a remit ' *to give the future system (of higher education) a cohesion which the present system lacks and to ensure that the community's needs in higher education are met'.*[35] It was established on a statutory base by the Higher Education Authority Act 1971. The first report of the Authority recommended the establishment of a Council for National Awards to '*grant certificates, diplomas and degrees to persons who have successfully pursued courses of study at third level institutions other than at universities'.*[36] Following discussions with the Chief Executive Officers of Limerick City and Co. Clare VECs, among others, the Authority recommended the establishment of a College of Higher Education in Limerick.[37] That first report had also offered a (begrudging) acknowledgement of an interface between the universities and the VECs, saying, '*...unfortunately our technological and higher technical education and commerce provision outside the universities still comprises little more than the third-level courses given in the Kevin Street, Bolton Street, and Rathmines Colleges in Dublin and the Crawford Municipal Technical Institute in Cork'.*[38] The following year, the Authority presented a report to the Minister on City of Dublin VECs proposals on its 'Ballymun Project'.[39]

As a separate development, the generality of VECs and Vocational schools continued with the type of provision which had its origins in the post-16 courses run in the period to 1967. Data at an aggregate national level compared over the total time span is presented in Figure 7.9. A new type of national framework for pre-vocational courses was developed by the Department of Education (Pre-employment courses) and provided, largely through the Vocational schools. Figure 7.9 shows a steady growth in this activity is discernible from 1979 to 1983 when a significant expansion takes place, followed by a steady state and then additional growth. Two subsequent phases of development occurred in this area since 1977. The first was the re-categorisation of Pre-employment Courses as Vocational Preparation and Training (VPT) Courses in 1984, (with additional European funding available) and shortly thereafter, the commencement of 'PLC' or Post-Leaving Certificate courses in VEC schools on their own initiative. Both are represented in the data presented in Figure 7.9.

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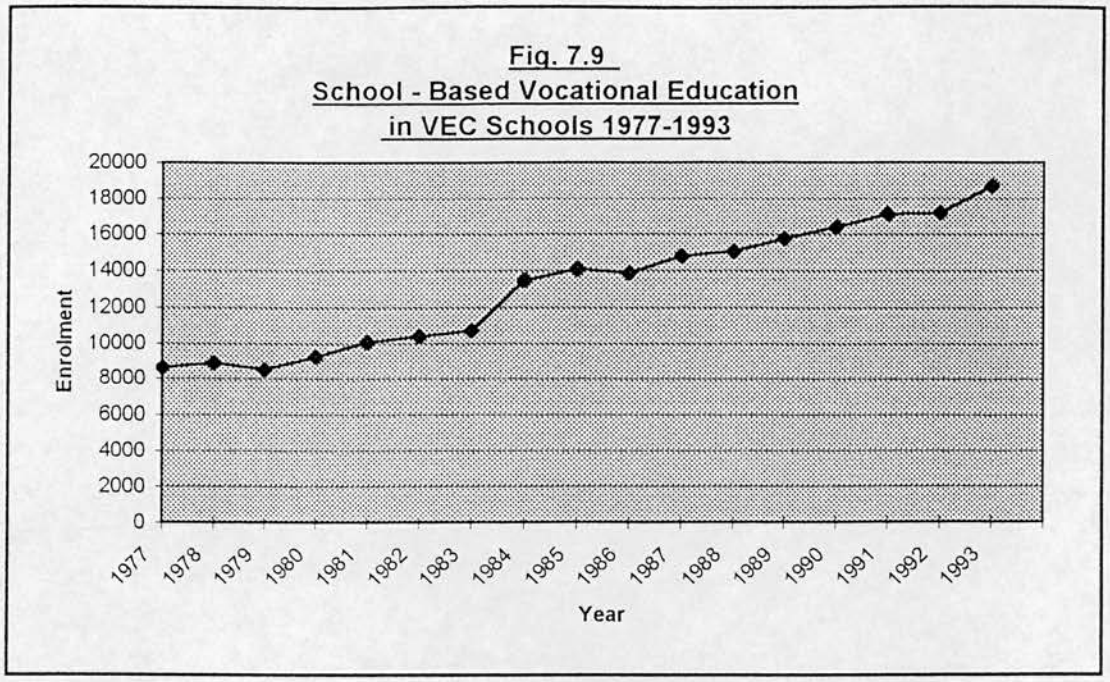
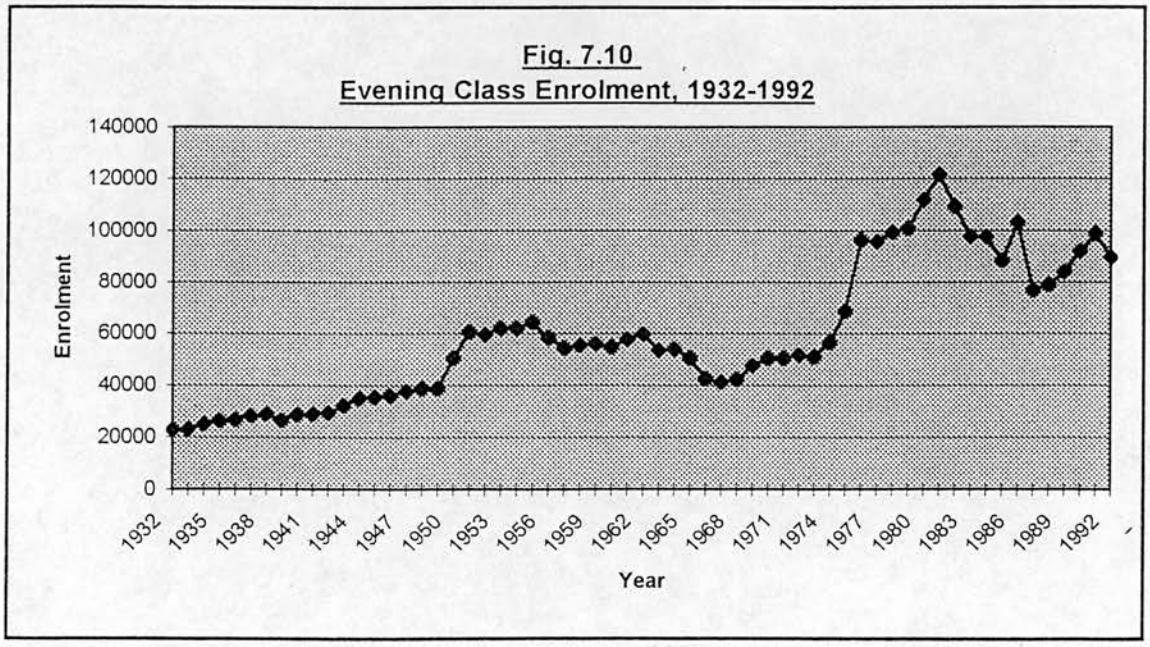
34 ibid, p13
35 ibid, p26
36 ibid, p31.
37 ibid, p32.
38 ibid. p41
39 The report was submitted to the Minister in 1970. 'Report on the Ballymun Project' was published on behalf of the Authority by The Stationery office, in 1972. See piii.



Source:Department of Education Statistical Reports:Various Years

Part-time Enrolments

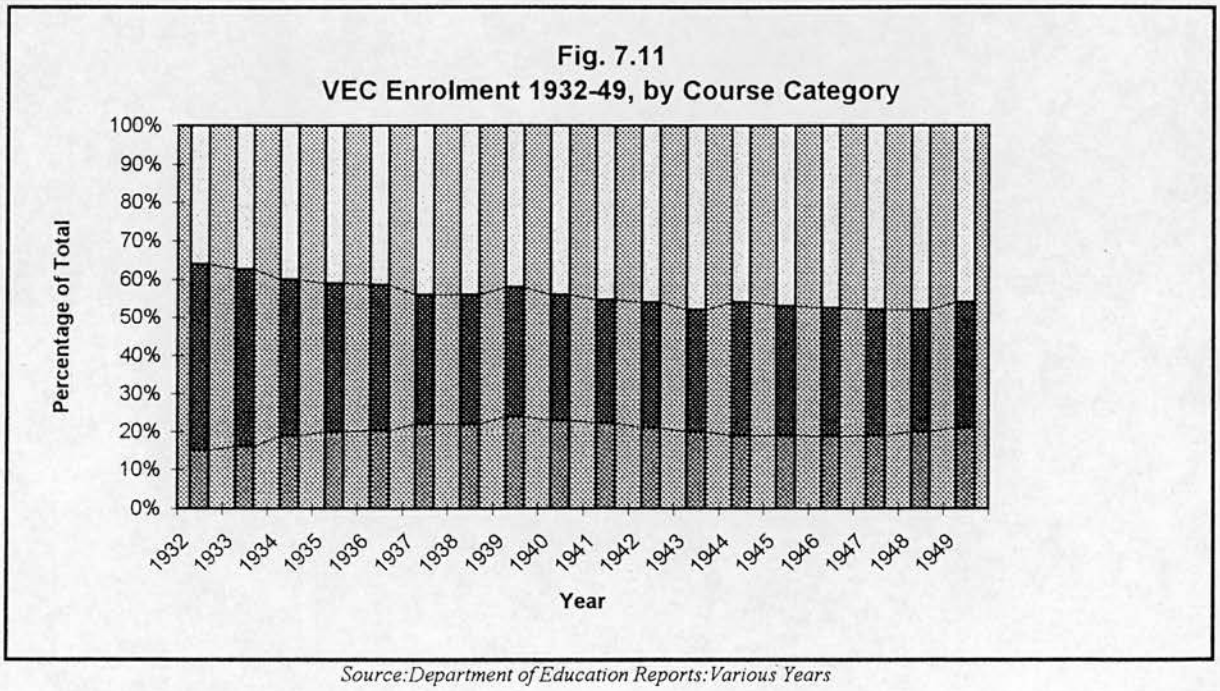
Because the pre-1930 Technical Instruction system was largely organised on a part-time basis, it is necessary to examine the developments in that form of provision during the early decades, if we are to establish a complete picture of the vocational education effort.



Source:Department of Education Statistical Reports; Various Years

In 1932, the total enrolment in the new system was 62,800, of whom 9,173, or fifteen percent, were returned as enrolled in wholetime courses. Over the period from 1932 to 1950, the reports of the Department of Education returned data on part-time classes in a range of different categories. In urban and county borough schemes, two types of classes were identified, 'Part-time Day Classes' and 'Evening Classes', with the greater proportion enrolled in the Evening Classes.[40] In county or rural schemes the picture was more complex, with two additional categories of class added: 'Rural Sessional Classes' and 'Rural Short Courses'.

If, however, we aggregate the part-time numbers a shifting ratio is observed. In 1932/33, 10,184 whole-time student compared with 52,616 part-time students provided a 5.2:1 ratio. By 1938, the ratio was reduced to 3.5: 1. In terms of teaching hours, the reduction was from almost an equality of hours tuition between part-time and whole-time in 1932, to a position where the ratio for whole-time was 2.16:1 in 1938.[41]



Source:Department of Education Reports:Various Years

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40 For example in 1933/34 there were 1,854 persons enrolled in Part-time Day Classes and 14,134 persons enrolled in Evening Classes, a ratio of 1: 7.5. See Report of Dept. of Education, 1933/34. The average hours tuition hours provided in the part-time courses ranged from 50-70. The average hours tuition provided per year, per student in wholetime courses ranged from 360 in 1932, to 610 in 1942. When the data was last presented in this format, 1949/50, the numbers (628 hrs per year, per student) had remained close the that established by 1942. Interestingly, the number of hours provided to students on wholetime courses in county or rural schools, took much longer to rise from a low of 372 hours per student per year in 1932, to 478 in 1942. By 1949/50 they had reached 593 hours per year per student.

Note: The data in respect of annual hours per student have been derived for the various years by dividing the enrolment numbers into the tuition hours provided, as reported in the annual reports.

41 Calculated on the basis of data on teaching hours as presented in the relevant annual reports of the Department of Education.

The changing picture is illustrated by the data assembled in Table 7.8 below. While it is difficult to be confident in the categorisation, it is proposed to assign 'Part-Time Day Classes', 'Rural Short Classes' and 'Rural Sessional Classes' in the grouping 'Part-time Technical' and assign school based 'Evening classes' to a category of their own. [The numbers for Part-time Technical Classes in Table 7.7, p151, above did not include these rural courses as Part-time Technical enrolments]. Because they can reasonably be assumed to relate directly to the work-requirements of their rural students, they are included as 'Technical' for the purposes of the analysis presented here.

Table 7.8

Part-time Students of the VECs,

1932-1950

Year	Wt. Cont. Classes	% of Enrolmts.	Part-time Technical	% of Enrolmts.	Evening Classes	% of Enrolmts.	Grand Total
1932	9,173	15%	30,768	49%	22,859	36%	62,800
1933	10,228	16%	28,915	46%	23,088	37%	62,231
1934	11,809	19%	25,872	41%	24,989	40%	62,670
1935	12,597	20%	24,671	39%	26,197	41%	63,465
1936	13,138	20%	24,827	38%	26,913	41%	64,878
1937	13,818	22%	21,695	34%	28,249	44%	63,762
1938	14,529	22%	22,342	34%	29,137	44%	66,008
1939	15,063	24%	21,011	34%	26,606	42%	62,680
1940	14,934	23%	21,899	33%	28,785	44%	65,618
1941	14,184	22%	20,750	32%	29,041	45%	63,975
1942	13,212	21%	20,796	33%	29,435	46%	63,443
1943	13,025	20%	21,354	32%	32,309	48%	66,688
1944	14,102	19%	26,299	35%	35,025	46%	75,426
1945	14,322	19%	25,720	34%	35,616	47%	75,658
1946	14,170	19%	25,342	34%	36,083	48%	75,595
1947	14,771	19%	26,392	33%	37,856	48%	79,019
1948	16,330	20%	25,768	32%	38,866	48%	80,964
1949	17,978	21%	28,151	33%	38,757	46%	84,886
Percentage Change	96%		-9%		70%		35%

Source: Department of Education Reports; Various Years

The overall position with respect of activity as represented in Table 7.8, is quite complex. What has been classified as 'Part-Time Technical Classes' went in significant decline during the war years and the time frame adopted here suggests that by 1950, levels of activity had not yet re-reached their 1932 level.

Evening classes however, did not suffer to the same extent from decline during the World War years and showed a significant level 70%) growth on its early 1930's levels of activity. The growth levels were, in absolute terms, greatest in the Evening classes - over 16,000; in relative terms, the greatest growth was in the new continuation classes - 96%.

While there is some difficulty in tracking 'Evening Classes' over the sixty year period, 1932 to 1992, Figure 7.10 suggests two periods of growth. However, scrutiny of the data shows that the increase in 1950 is attributable to the re-designation of approximately 13,000 students from 'Part-Time Technical' to 'Evening Classes' between 1949 and 1950, and further significant transfers over the next two years. If we regard the data from that period on as a reasonable basis for comparison, then the period of most significant change occurred immediately after 1974. This was the year in which Adult Education Organisers (AEOs) were first appointed by VECs with an explicit remit for the development of Adult Education provision by VECs.

Summary

The overall picture is one of development: of development in two fairly decisively defined phases around the mid 1960's when the most rapid growth occurred. The continuation education programme of VECs grew most steadily being the major focus of system endeavour in the first thirty year period. Growth in the vocational school continuation programme was never out of proportion to its early share of the post-primary provision. In the second phase, growth in continuation education programmes was accompanied by equally strong growth in whole-time technical programme enrolments in the new Regional Technical Colleges.

In general, fluctuations in enrolments during the war years illustrate a sensitivity to labour market conditions not evident in secondary school enrolments over the same period. The 1950's development of part- time and whole-time technical education may also be construed in this manner.

In Part II of Chapter 7, data on the labour market characteristics of VEC students will throw further light on this matter.

CHAPTER 7

THE VEC SYSTEM IN DEVELOPMENT, 1930-1990

Part II

SOME LABOUR MARKET CHARACTERISTICS OF VEC STUDENTS

In this section of the Chapter the clientele of the Vocational Education Committee system is examined with a view to establish some labour market characteristics of VEC students as part of the analysis of the relationship between the VEC system and the economy. Again the data is presented as aggregated at the system or national level. Data on occupation for either the students themselves or their households, as well as data on destination occupation, is presented. Because of the significance of emigration in the Irish labour market, data is presented from other research which identifies the emigration experience of VEC graduates. In addition, gender data which tracks the male/female ratios in VEC enrolments is also presented. A number of sources of information are examined and presented. In this Chapter, particular use is made of Reports of the Department of Education, especially for the years 1932 to 1943, and Vol.7 of the Census for 1966, together with the Census for 1981,Vol.10. Reports and publications of the Higher Education Authority and the National Council for Educational Awards are used as sources for data on the characteristics of Regional Technical Colleges and other technological institutes under the aegis of the VECs.

Before the Act

As a preliminary, data gleaned from the annual reports of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, responsible for the Technical Instruction Committees, provide an insight to the starting points, in terms of student origins, with which the new VEC were commencing their work. In 1926, 53.6% of the active labour-force was engaged in agriculture, 33.6% were in service employment and 12.8% were in manufacturing employment.[1] We have seen from the enrolment data in Table 7.1 above, the extent to which cultural education and the training needs of service employment had come to dominate the Technical Instruction system's operations in the 1920's.

A further insight into the work relatedness of technical instruction in the 1920's can be gleaned by an analysis of the data on the occupations of students as published by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (DATI) for 1920/21, 1921/22 and 1922/23.[2] (Table 7.1(a) and (b)).

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1 Gilmor (1985), p31

2 DATI Report, 1920-21, p270-271; DATI Report 1921-22, p178; DATI Report, 1922-23, p182.

The first point to be noted from this data is the majority position of women. If an average of the three years for which data is available is collated. women constituted sixty-one percent of enrolment, as opposed to thirty-nine percent for men.

Table 7.9(a)

Technical Instruction Schemes, 1920-23

Occupations and Number of Students

Summary from DATI Reports (A) Males

Occupation	1920/21		1921/22		1922/23	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farming Occupations	2286	14.4%	2939	20.1%	3211	21.7%
Building and Wood Trades	1011	6.4%	683	4.7%	548	3.7%
Coach and Car Builders	133	0.8%	138	0.9%	98	0.7%
Engineers, Metalworkers & Draughtsmen	2404	15.2%	1027	7.0%	827	5.6%
Architects, Surveyors, Civil Engineers	71	0.4%	92	0.6%	82	0.6%
Electrical & Scientific Engineers	337	2.1%	213	1.5%	215	1.5%
Printing Trades	232	1.5%	234	1.6%	220	1.5%
Textiles Industries	535	3.4%	31	0.2%	14	0.1%
Painters, Decorators, etc	184	1.2%	117	0.8%	69	0.5%
Plumbers, Gasfitters, etc	175	1.1%	117	0.8%	106	0.7%
Apple. Arts - e.g. Jewelers, Furniture Makers	104	0.7%	106	0.7%	108	0.7%
Chemists, Druggists, etc	165	1.0%	118	0.8%	113	0.8%
Salesmen, Shopkeepers, Warehousemen,	1336	8.4%	1054	7.2%	846	5.7%
Clerks in Commercial Offices	1615	10.2%	944	6.5%	1096	7.4%
Clerks in Banks, Civil Service, Law, etc.	535	3.4%	551	3.8%	603	4.1%
Teachers, Asst.Teachers, Pupil Teachers	901	5.7%	1381	9.5%	1351	9.1%
University Students	214	1.4%	185	1.3%	191	1.3%
Other Occupations	1239	7.8%	1490	10.2%	1608	10.9%
Just Left School or College	466	2.9%	546	3.7%	506	3.4%
Attending School	761	4.8%	791	5.4%	695	4.7%
Not Stated	1120	7.1%	1832	12.6%	2284	15.4%
TOTAL	15824	100%	14589	100%	14791	100

Source:Reports of the Department of Agriculture & Technical Instruction, 1920-23

Examining the occupations of men, and again using the data of the three years to provide a 'rolling average', enrolments were distributed as follows:

Farm Occupations: 18.7%
Trades: 19.7%
Service Employment 27.9%
Professionals: 3.5%[3]

[3] Included in the 'Trades' grouping were: Building & Wood trades, Coach and Car builders, Engineers, Metalworkers & Draughtsmen, Printing trades, Textiles Industries, Painters & Decorators, and Plumbers & Gasfitters. Included in the Service Employment group were

Table 7.9(b)

Technical Instruction Schemes, 1920-23

Occupations and Number of Students

Summary from DATI Reports (B) Females

Occupation	1920/21		1921/22		1922/23	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farming Occupations	2889	10.9%	2623	12.2%	2743	12.3%
Domestic Servants	1363	5.1%	1292	6.0%	1260	5.6%
Printing Trades	68	0.3%	32	0.1%	24	0.1%
Dressmakers, Milliners	745	2.8%	520	2.4%	438	2.0%
Textile Industries	857	3.2%	82	0.4%	68	0.3%
Other Factory Workers	1445	5.5%	259	1.2%	254	1.1%
Workers in Lace Crochet, etc.,	687	2.6%	491	2.3%	363	1.6%
Saleswomen, Shopkeepers	1795	6.8%	1279	6.0%	1302	5.8%
Clerks, Cashiers, Civil Servants, etc.,	2617	9.9%	1562	7.3%	1524	6.8%
Teachers, Asst. Teachers, Pupil Teachers	2863	10.8%	3258	15.2%	3390	15.2%
University Students	153	0.6%	131	0.6%	235	1.1%
Other Occupations	1554	5.9%	1987	9.3%	1621	7.3%
Just left School or College	1203	4.5%	1043	4.9%	1272	5.7%
Attending School or College	1175	4.4%	734	3.4%	967	4.3%
Not Stated	7055	26.7%	6171	28.8%	6866	30.8%
Total	**26469**	100%	**21464**	100%	**22327**	100%

Source:Department of Agriculture & Technical Instruction Reports: 1920-1923

If a similar exercise is carried out with the female students the following trends emerge:

Female Farm occupations: 11.7%;

Female Factory workers: 6.8%

and **Female Service workers: 27.9%.**

For both men and women the numbers whose occupations is either not stated or given as 'Other', amounts to twenty percent approximately. This suggests that some caution should be exercised in making inferences about the relative size of the grouping utilised. However, this data indicates firstly, a broad spread of occupational participation in technical instruction courses; secondly, the attractiveness of technical instruction classes for clerical and other 'blue collar' workers. Clerks, salesmen and shopkeepers are twice as much in evidence (over the three years aggregated) as metalworkers and draughtsmen. Members of the service group of employment are substantially larger than other groups in both the male and female data. Amongst women, sales-women and clerks constitute fourteen percent of the three year

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Chemists etc., Salesmen etc., Clerks in commercial offices, Clerks in banks, Civil Service, Law etc., and Teachers, Asst. Teachers, & Pupil Teachers. The Professional group include Architects, Surveyors, civil engineers, Electrical & Scientific engineers and university students.

averaged enrolments. Thirdly, farmers and trade related employment are represented in broadly equal proportions amongst men. Byrne (1982) suggests that the range and content of courses offered by Technical Instruction Committees varied significantly with the creativity and energy of the committee members and, in particular the secretary and principal.[4] At a national level, the aggregate data cited here suggests a low overall level of usage of the system, a high proportion of female usage, and an emphasis on service employment, and especially commercial, employment, and the extensive use of the system for cultural/political purposes, that is, Irish language learning.

1932-43: Data from Annual Reports

For the period 1932-1943, annual reports of the Department of Education gave information of the Occupations of all individual students[5]. The returns for the years 1932,1938 and 1943 have been collated with a view to establishing if any trends were observable for the period for which the data exists. Two summaries of the data are presented here.

4 See Byrne, (1982) opcit. p380 ff.

5 The raw data analysed is presented in Returns 1(a) and 1(b) in Appendix VI - Vocational Education, of the relevant reports. This data was not included in annual reports after 1943.

Table 7.10

Occupations of VEC students 1932-43 - Selected

	1932/33	1938/39	1943/44
Total	62,800	66,010	66,688
Male	29,372	31,587	31,277
Female	33,428	34,423	35,411
No. Occupation	12,016	6,008	6,115
1. Wholetime Vocational Sch. Students	10,184	14,797	13,153
2. Home Duties	8,334	9,284	9,253
3. Farmers and Relatives Assisting	7,359	1,012	1,066
4. Civil Servants and Local Authority Officials	3,599	1,707	1,927
5. Primary & Secondary Students	3,534	2,786	2,869
6. Clerks	2,514	2,786	2,869
7. Shop Assistants & Salesmen	2,393	2,590	2,685
8. Domestic Servants	1,903	2,568	2,093
9. Teachers & Teachers in Training	1,626	1,075	1,036
10. Agricultural labourers, Gardeners etc	1,606	1,856	586
11. Other Occupations	1,541	2,712	2,247
12. Carpenters	686	988	645
13. Typists	616	851	799
14. Motor Mechanics	602	603	385
15. Shopkeepers & Managers	447	385	528
16. Other Industrial Workers	363	691	1,172
17. Workers in Chemical Processes	69	157	660

Source: Department Of Education Annual Reports

Table 7.10 lists the occupational categories in order of their prominence in 1932/33. In that year, the unemployed (No Occupation) were the largest single grouping, constituting 22.8% of the total numbers. By 1943, they were very significantly outstripped by the numbers of wholetime students and by those on Home Duties, and their number had fallen to 11.4% of the total. The large increases were primarily in the whole-time student numbers, as already examined.[6] In the years collated, there is also a substantial reduction in the numbers of 'Farmers & Relatives Assisting' and a reduction also in the numbers of Civil Servants & Local Authority officials attending classes. Other groups, and particularly those in which women were employed, remain constant with only minor fluctuations in the numbers attending classes. It is noteworthy that substantial provision for the needs of commercial and administrative personnel continues from the pre-1930 era. Shop assistants and Salesmen and Clerks continue to be served. The Table above suggests that in some areas of industry, e.g., the chemical industry and the electrical industry, that an increased demand for technical education is observable. It is also to be noted that the number of people for

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The minor discrepancies in the numbers between this table and data in Table 7.8, p156 arise from the distinction between enrolments and individual students. There were some students enrolled on more that one whole-time course and so double counted in departmental statistics.

whom an occupation is not ascribed rises significantly after the first set of data examined. It is probably reasonable to assume that a proportion of these would in earlier years have been returned as 'No Occupation'.

If the total data is aggregated to classify occupations in terms of 'occupational levels', the following proportional distribution occurs:(It should be noted that wholesome students attending VEC courses have been excluded from the analysis presented here.)

Table 7.11

Part-time Students, 1932-1943,

by Occupation Classification; Percentage Distribution

Percentage Distribution

Occupational/Social Group	1932/33	1938/39	1943/44
No Occupation	22.8%	11.7%	11.4%
Agriculture	17.2%	5.7%	3.2%
Home Duties	15.8%	18.1%	17.3%
Non-Skilled Manual	6.3%	8.6%	9.4%
Lower Technical	8.7%	12.1%	11.2%
Petit-Bourgeoisie	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%
Routine Non-Manual (Clerical)	20.9%	18.4%	20.6%
Professional/Administrative	0.5%	0.9%	0.7%
Other Occupations	7.4%	23.6%	25.1%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source:Department of Education Reports:Relevant Years

Occupations assigned by the author to each group following Whelan et al (1992)

As this run of data is not available for any other period of VEC story, it important to maximise its contribution to our understanding of the relationship between the VEC system and the Irish economy. In Chapter 5 we described the period 1932-1939 as a period of 'Protectionism and Economic War.'[7] That analysis is the context for our interpretation of the data. The Fianna Fail government came to power with a commitment to greater economic self-sufficiency and to eliminating an economic dependence on Britain. Free trade policies under the previous administration had failed to stem emigration nor had they prevented the decline of agricultural output. The course of the Irish economy in the 1930's was dominated

7 See Chapter 5, p28. Also O'Grada, 1997, p 4-21.

by three factors - a protectionist policy, the Economic War and the impact of the Great Depression. Exports declined by almost thirty percent from 1931to 1936. Farm prices for 1932-39 were less than half the average of the preceding seven years. Industrial output, however, had increased by forty percent between 1931 and 1936 and industrial employment increased by an average of six percent between 1931 and 1938. Fianna Fail economic policy aimed at greater self-sufficiency through the creation of a native manufacturing sector and a switch in agricultural production from livestock to tillage. But emigration to the U.S. was severely restricted and slowed to a trickle in 1931-32, to resume in 1933 and to reach an outflow of 31,000 in 1936, only to be reversed again for the early years of the war. By 1941, however, the process had recommenced and continued at very high levels up to 1970.[8]

Table 7.12 presents sectional economic activity in 1936 and can be used as a rough guide with which to interpret Table 7.11.

Table 7.12

Sectoral

Economic Activity in Ireland, 1936

	In'000s	%
Agriculture	614	46%
Industry	206	15%
Services	415	31%
Unemployed	96	7%
Total Labour Force	1331	100%

Source: Kennedy et al (1988), p143

The Vocational education system, in terms of its part-time provision in the years for which we have the relevant data, reflected the crises and changes in Irish agriculture by a significant fall off in the enrolment of persons engaged in agriculture from 17% to 3% of the total. The Service sector, in the form of clerical workers, continued to be a major portion (over 20%), of the part-time student population. In line with the increases in industrial employment, there was a significant increase of part-time students in 'Lower Technical/ Skilled Manual' and in the 'Non-Skilled Manual' categories. Taken together, these groups grew to constitute the largest segment of the part-time student body, representing in 1943/44 a total of 21.6% of

8 See Table 7.15, p170.

the part-time students. This data, which relates to part-time students, shows a system affected by and responding to the pressures and priorities of the labour market, while making contact with the equivalent of approximately 20% of the labour force.

System Output: The 1966 Census

On the basis of a recommendation from the 'Investment in Education' survey Team Report, the Census of Population of Ireland carried out in 1966 had a set of questions on the educational characteristics of the population, which were reported in Vol. VII.[9] The Census form included a question, which required those aged 14, or over or no longer receiving full-time education to identify the type of school attended to the highest level. The categories utilised were 'Primary', 'Secondary', 'Vocational', 'Secondary and Vocational' and 'University'. The data is presented with separate tables for males and females and collating type of school attended with age and occupation.

TABLE 7.13 from CENSUS 1966

(I) SUMMARY - from TABLE 3A & 3B				Highest Educational Establishment Attended				
	Over 14	At School	(Ed.) Ceased	Primary	Secondary	Vocational	Voc. & Sec.	University.
Males	1,017,903	73,656	944,247	625,734	129,886	76,634	33,076	43,439
Females	1,020,980	69,337	951,643	565,265	183,548	76,638	56,185	29,750
Total	2,038,883	142,993	1,895,890	1,190,999	313,434	153,272	89,261	73,189
% Total	100%	7%	93%	58%	15%	8%	4%	4%

Note: 75,735 persons (4%) did not state highest educational establishment attended

9 CSO, (1970), *Census of Population of Ireland, 1966*, Vol. VII, EDUCATION, Prl. 1195, Dublin: The Stationery Office.

(II) 1966 CENSUS DATA

POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY AGE AND HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT ATTENDED FULL-TIME.

From TABLES 4A-4B, - *PERCENTAGES.*

(I) MALES

AGE	TOTAL COHORT	HIGHEST TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT ATTENDED						
		Primary	Secondary	**Vocational**	**Sec. & Voc.**	University	**Tot. Voc.**	*Year aged 14*
15-19	100%	58.0	15.2	**22.4**	**4.2**	0.3	**26.6**	*1961-65*
20-24	100%	48.5	22.4	**18.2**	**6.7**	4.2	**24.9**	*1956-60*
25-29	100%	51.9	19.3	**14.5**	**6.4**	8.0	**20.9**	*1951-55*
30-34	100%	57.4	18.2	**11.1**	**5.6**	7.0	**16.7**	*1946-50*
35-39	100%	64.7	16.3	**7.7**	**4.6**	6.7	**12.3**	*1941-45*
40-44	100%	68.3	15.0	**6.8**	**4.2**	5.8	**11.0**	*1936-40*
45-49	100%	71.7	14.3	**5.4**	**3.3**	5.4	**8.7**	*1931-35*
50-54	100%	76.3	12.3	**3.8**	**2.5**	5.1	**6.3**	*1926-30*
55-59	100%	78.9	11.4	**2.9**	**2.2**	4.6	**5.1**	*1921-25*
60-64	100%	80.9	11.3	**2.2**	**1.6**	4.0	**3.8**	*1916-20*
65-69	100%	84.4	9.0	**1.7**	**1.2**	3.7	**2.9**	*1911-15*
70-74	100%	86.9	7.8	**1.2**	**0.9**	3.9	**2.1**	*1906-10*
75-79	100%	88.9	6.4	**1.0**	**0.8**	3.0	**1.8**	*1901-05*
80-94	100%	89.7	5.8	**0.9**	**0.9**	3.0	**1.8**	*1898-1900*
85+	100%	90.6	5.6	**0.7**	**0.4**	2.8	**1.1**	*1891-1895*

Source:Census 1966 Vol. VII, Tables 4A-4B

(2) FEMALES

AGE	TOTAL COHORT	HIGHEST TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT ATTENDED						
		Primary	Secondary	**Vocational**	**Sec. & Voc.**	University	**Tot. Voc.**	*Year aged*
								14
15-19	100%	52.0	21.1	**18.6**	**8.1**	0.2	**26.7**	*1961-65*
20-24	100%	38.8	28.3	**15.0**	**14.1**	3.8	**29.1**	*1956-60*
25-29	100%	43.0	25.9	**13.1**	**12.0**	6.0	**25.1**	*1951-55*
30-34	100%	50.2	24.4	**11.0**	**9.6**	4.9	**20.6**	*1946-50*
35-39	100%	56.5	22.3	**9.6**	**7.2**	4.3	**16.8**	*1941-45*
40-44	100%	60.8	20.8	**9.0**	**6.1**	3.3	**15.1**	*1936-40*
45-49	100%	64.7	20.1	**7.2**	**4.8**	3.1	**12.0**	*1931-35*
50-54	100%	69.7	18.3	**5.2**	**3.6**	3.2	**8.8**	*1926-30*
55-59	100%	70.9	18.4	**4.3**	**3.3**	3.1	**7.6**	*1921-25*
60-64	100%	74.3	16.5	**3.6**	**2.7**	2.9	**6.3**	*1916-20*
65-69	100%	77.8	14.9	**2.7**	**1.9**	2.7	**4.6**	*1911-15*
70-74	100%	81.6	12.9	**1.8**	**1.3**	2.3	**3.1**	*1906-10*
75-79	100%	83.1	12.4	**1.2**	**0.8**	2.3	**2.0**	*1901-05*
80-94	100%	84.2	12.0	**1.0**	**0.8**	2.0	**1.8**	*1898-1900*
85+	100%	85.6	11.4	**0.7**	**0.6**	1.6	**1.3**	*1891-1895*

Source:Census 1966. Tables 4A-4B

The data above indicates that by 1966 the Vocational education system had been utilised for education and training by twelve percent of the population, as opposed to fifty-eight percent who completed schooling with primary school, and fifteen percent who had attended secondary schools. At this point, the numbers of males and females who had utilised the system for full-time education was virtually the same, (76,634 males and 76,638 females) when those who have attended vocational schools only are taken into consideration. When the numbers who have attended secondary and then vocational schools are examined, the ratio is skewed in favour of females who outnumber males by 56,185 to 33,076, or 63% to 37%. This leaves a 45: 55 overall balance between the sexes in the twelve- percent of the Irish population who in 1966 had utilised the Vocational Education system for their education and training needs.

When the changes over time, as evident in the data for differing age cohorts, are examined, it is possible to quantify the progressive impact of the system on the population. The cohorts, which reached the age of fourteen after the introduction of the Vocational Education Act in 1930, were under fifty years of age in 1966. These cohorts show a progressively increased impact of the system on the population. Using the data referring to all those who had utilised the system, there is a progressive increase from 8.7% of 45-49 year old males to almost 25% of 20-24 year-old males. Female's representation moves from 12% among the 45-49 year-olds to 29.1% among the 20-24 year-olds. However, approximately half of the women and a quarter of the men had also utilised the services of secondary schools for their education. Some indication of what was happening can be gleaned from Table 7.14 which collates the distribution of persons for a number of principal occupations by type of educational establishment attended.

TABLE 7.14

CENSUS 1966

DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS BY TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT ATTENDED FOR SELECTED PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION GROUPS.

Occupational Group	Total	Primary	Secondary	Vocational	Second. & Vocational	University	Total Vocational
Males							
Agriculture	100%	86.9%	7.5%	**4.1%**	**1.0%**	0.5%	**5.1%**
Electrical/Elect.	100%	29.1%	16.8%	**32.8%**	**18.6%**	2.8%	**51.4%**
Woodworkers	100%	53.5%	9.8%	**31.2%**	**5.2%**	0.2%	**36.4%**
Building & Const.	100%	82.0%	6.4%	**9.5%**	**1.7%**	0.3%	**11.2%**
Labourer/Unskilled	100%	91.0%	3.7%	**4.5%**	**0.7%**	0.0%	**5.2%**
Transport & Comm.	100%	75.6%	11.6%	**9.1%**	**2.9%**	0.8%	**12.0%**
Clerks	100%	13.6%	60.4%	**7.5%**	**13.6%**	4.9%	**21.1%**
Commerce & Fnce.	100%	42.1%	35.2%	**11.6%**	**7.6%**	3.4%	**19.2%**
Admin./Exec .& Mgt.	100%	8.8%	44.1%	**5.8%**	**13.7%**	27.5%	**19.5%**
Professional. & Tch.	100%	5.4%	16.8%	**3.9%**	**6.1%**	67.8%	**10.0%**
Females							
Agriculture	100%	77.3%	14.1%	**5.3%**	**2.4%**	0.9%	**7.7%**
Textile workers	100%	79.9%	7.2%	**11.9%**	**1.0%**	0.0%	**12.9%**
Makers of Textile goods	100%	79.7%	6.9%	**11.9%**	**1.3%**	0.2%	**13.2%**
Clerks & Typists	100%	7.4%	38.1%	**19.5%**	**33.0%**	2.0%	**52.5%**
Commerce & Finance	100%	42.0%	33.4%	**17.3%**	**6.4%**	0.9%	**23.7%**
Service workers	100%	71.5%	13.5%	**11.1%**	**3.3%**	0.6%	**14.4%**
Professional & Technical	100%	8.2%	43.4%	**5.1%**	**6.9%**	36.4%	**12.0%**

Source:Census 1966, Vol. VII Table X

The relative dominance of education for commercial occupations is again a striking feature of the data. It is observed that over fifty percent of the women 'Clerks & Typists' availed of vocational school courses; however, thirty-three percent of these had already attended secondary school. An even larger number (38%) were able to get straight into such work from secondary schools. A strong reliance on the vocational system education is also evident in the Electrical/Electronics industry and also in the Woodworking industry. However, in no occupation did graduates of the VEC system have anything like a near monopoly of the employment opportunities.

In a further exercise, persons engaged in agriculture were disaggregated to allow an examination of those who were farmers in farms of varying sizes. This analysis suggests that by 1966 only five percent of existing farmers had utilised the VEC system for their post-primary education. The great bulk (87%) had not proceeded beyond primary education and 7.5% had attended secondary schools. Among those who

utilised the vocational education system, the data reveals a decided correlation between size of farm and participation in vocational education. Only 2.8% of farmers with farms under thirty acres utilised the system; 5.3% of those with farms in the 30-100 acres range utilised it and 7.3% of those with farms over 100 acres did so.[10]

Vocational Education and Emigration 1930-1960's

The 1966 Census data relates to the population as of April 17th that year. In the period 1930-1966, out-migration had been the single most striking phenomenon of Irish society. Those enumerated in each cohort in April 1966, were the remainder when a significant proportion of those who had been born into the cohort had left the country. (See Table 7.15 and the discussion on demographic contexts in Chapter 4).

In the period 1926-36, the average number of births was 58,350; in the same period, the average numbers emigrating was 16,675; 7,255 men and 9,420 women. In 1936-46, births ran at about 60,000 annually and emigration averaged 18,700. In the five post-war years, 1946-51 births averaged 65,736 and emigration had risen to an annual average of 24,384.[11] These averages masked a high level of sensitivity to labour market and general conditions in the main receiving countries, the United Kingdom and the United States. These sensitivities were manifest in the annual fluctuations of the emigration figures. Thus during the years of the 'Great Depression' in the U.S., 1929-1933, emigration went into reverse and there was nil net emigration in 1931-1932. In the same way the early years of World War II saw the numbers of emigrants change from an outflow of 31,000 in 1936, to a net in-migration of 4,000 in 1939 and the return of 20,000 in 1940. The next year saw a great change with 33,000 emigrating in 1941 and 46,000 emigrating in 1942. The last years of the war saw reductions in the numbers emigrating again, with 14,000 in1944 and 9,000 in 1946 leaving the country. And then came the years of a steady flow of people out of the country, with numbers ranging from 30,000 to 58,000 leaving the state each year. These figures represented a significant proportion of every annual age cohort leaving the country. Thirty thousand people represented approximately half of an annual birth cohort; 58,000 represented over 95% of an age cohort.

To understand the economic significance of vocational education in Ireland of that period it is necessary to illuminate the relationship between emigration and vocational education.

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10 These percentages are derived from Table 21A, p172, of *Census of Population of Ireland, 1966.* The data cited refers to males only.

11 This data is drawn from *Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems, 1948-1954,* (PR. 2541) Dublin:The Stationery Office, p21 & 23.

Table 7.15

Annual Estimates of Net Migration 1930-1959

1930	0	1940	+20,000	1950	-30,000
1931	0	1941	-33,000	1951	-25,000
1932	-9,000	1942	-46,000	1952	-33,000
1933	-17,000	1943	-24,000	1953	-36,000
1934	-18,000	1944	-14,000	1954	-45,000
1935	-31,000	1945	-21,000	1955	-48,000
1936	-26,000	1946	-9,000	1956	-41,000
1937	-19,000	1947	-16,000	1957	-58,000
1938	+4,000	1948	-30,000	1958	-32,000
1939	+20,000	1949	-36,000	1959	-41,000

Source: NESC (1991), p.55

The Commission on Emigration considered the matter rather cursorily and offered the following observations: [12]

> *We consider that what is needed, even more than an extension of compulsory education, is a sounder and broader basic education at the primary stage, so that the minds of young people will be better prepared and more inclined to seek vocational, technical, or adult education subsequently.*
>
> *Views differed (among members of the Commission-B.O'R.) on the question of secondary education. Some held that the facilities, especially in rural areas, were insufficient, that the schools were overcrowded and that the standard had deteriorated according as the number of pupils had increased. Others were apprehensive that there were too many such facilities and that too many young people were being educated with a view to "white collar" employment and professional careers.*
>
> *There is, however, general agreement that there can hardly be too much vocational or technical education for young people and adults. Much is being already achieved in many parts of the country but much remains to be done, especially by providing courses in agriculture and farming methods (and not merely instruction in rural science) and in domestic and household crafts. Technical and vocational education can take many forms but should, in general, be designed with a view to the pupils' future trade or career while incorporating with it some general secondary education. At the same time, it must be remembered that, since attendance is voluntary, courses of a particular kind cannot be initiated unless there is demand for them in the locality. Much propaganda is required to demonstrate the practical value of such continuation education. Some witnesses were very definite that technical and vocational education, by developing the aptitudes of young people and providing them with skilled training, enabled them to take better advantage of employment opportunities, and was therefore a deterrent to emigration. While this may be true, it is no less desirable that the educational standard of those who emigrate should be raised so that*

12 ibid, p177-8.

they are not confined to the more arduous and menial forms of employment through lack of adequate education.'[13]

The Commission presented no data on the actual impact of vocational education on migration. Such data first appeared in the published report of a seminal research project conducted in 1964.

Hannon (1970) 'Rural Exodus'

In 1964, Hannon conducted a research project, (Hannon, 1970) in which, inter alia, he addressed the question of how the selectivity in rural migration is affected by education. His study focused on primary school leavers for the years 1960-64 (Total number: 1,485) in an area centred on the county town of the rural county of Cavan, in the north-central portion of the state,[14] Given its timing, immediately prior to the introduction of the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate examinations into the vocational school system, this study provides empirical data which allows insights into the specific economic and social roles of the education sub-systems, with particular reference to their impact on migration. The model utilised by Hannon suggests a number of major attitudinal factors which contribute to migration decisions. These are 'Occupational Frustration', 'Income Frustration', 'Community Satisfaction', 'Attitude *towards the Community's Social Provision'*, and the extent of *'Family Obligations'*. [15]

Hannon's results demonstrate a 'very clearcut relationship between the level of occupational aspiration/ achievement... and educational level; and, although the association is not as close, there is a similar strong relationship with income aspirations.'[16] For our purposes it is illuminating to focus on the differential impact of attendance at vocational school courses. As can be observed from Table 7.16 below, those who attended vocational schools held an intermediate position between the primary and secondary educated, in terms of their reported strength of occupational frustration and income frustration.[17] In respect of 'respondents perceptions of the strength of 'Family Obligations' the vocational school educated held an intermediate position.

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13 In an addendum to the commission's report Rev. Thomas Counihan, S.J. posed three questions about the vocational schools and their Continuation courses:
- i) *'Was there a real need to build schools to house under the same roof both boys and girls';*
- ii) *'Was it not strange that the nuns and the Christian Brothers who had been providing such courses in some cases were not invited to develop this work'?;*
- iii) *'Why were not efforts made to enlarge and equip as many National Schools as possible around the country in order to cater for the new courses?'.* ibid, p193.

14 Hannon, D.' *Rural Exodus: A Study of the forces influencing the large-scale migration of Irish rural youth'*, London:Geoffrey Chapman, p44.

15 ibid, pp53-62, also pp108-120.

16 ibid, p108-9

17 If the 'partly frustrated' and the 'frustrated' categories are aggregated - as those not fully convinced they can fulfil their aspirations locally - the general trend is more transparent, especially in respect of income frustration. It is interesting to note that far more respondents believe that suitable occupational outlets were available than believed that these were satisfactorily remunerated. Hannon (p110) suggested in 1970 that this data indicated that *'an improvement in incomes alone, even maintaining the current occupational structure, would have a considerable influence in reducing the frustrations that influence migration behaviour'.*

Table 7.16 *(From Hannon, 1970, p.109)*

The Relationship between (i) Occupational Frustration, (ii) Income Frustration and Educational level Achieved

	Level of Education Achieved		
	Primary Only	1 to 3 years of vocational education	3 to 5 years of secondary education
(i) *Occupational Frustration*	%	%	%
Not Frustrated	64.6	47.9	32.8
Partly Frustrated	10.8	35.6	42.1
Frustrated	24.6	16.5	25.1
Total %	*100*	*100*	*100*
No.	*130*	*194*	*195*
Gamma =.262			
(ii) Income Frustration	%	%	%
Not Frustrated	49	30.5	18.1
Partly Frustrated	12.2	29.4	41.5
Frustrated	38.8	40.1	40.4
Total %	*100*	*100*	*100*
No.	*130*	*194*	*195*
Gamma = .188			

However, in respect of *Community Satisfaction'* and *'Attitude toward the Community's Social Provisions'* the vocationally educated report the most negative attitudes.[18]

In reporting these findings, Hannon offers the following observations:

> *In comparison with the primary educated, those in vocational schools are far more likely to use the secondary educated as a reference group in assessing how satisfactory their own position is. They are, therefore, open to more obvious and more invidious comparison by the community with the higher status secondary educated than happens between the primary and secondary educated. They are also more likely to compare themselves to the secondary educated. As a result their general feelings of satisfaction with the community are likely to be more negative than any other group. Despite these interesting differences, however, the variations among educational groups in these two attitudes are hardly sufficient to make any great differences in migration intentions.*

The data that he presents on migration intentions among his sample does show substantial differences by educational group. Only 12 per cent of the secondary educated intended to remain locally compared to 25

18 Hannon, (1970) p111.

percent of the vocationally educated and 38 percent of the primary educated. If their occupational aspirations were met locally, only 20 percent of the secondary educated, would remain locally. In these circumstances, 41 per cent of the vocationally educated report that they would remain while the figure for the primary educated is 56 percent[19] Hannon summarises his finding by contending that the higher levels of migration intention among the secondary and vocationally educated can be accounted by their higher levels of occupational and income frustration and their lower levels of family obligations.[20] Hannon did a follow up survey in 1968 to relate intentions with subsequent behaviour. In general terms the follow-up study indicated that while the proportion who actually emigrated was quite close to the proportion that intended to migrate, (36% in 1965 'definitely intended' to migrate; over 46% had actually migrated by 1968.) There was a significant number who intended to stay and subsequently left, and vice versa.[21] Of the five factors strongly correlated with the intention to migrate only three were as strongly correlated to subsequent migration behaviour.[22] They were, '*Occupational Frustration*', '*Income Frustration*', and '*Family Obligations*'. The follow-up study also allowed an examination of the actual occupational destination of the various school groups. The presentation of this data as in Hannon's original provides a useful insight into the occupational relationships of the systems.

19 ibid, p112 & 114.
20 ibid, p115.
21 ibid, p182.
22 ibid, p200.

Table 7.17

The Relationship between Educational Level Achieved and Migration, controlling for the effects of Occupational Status Achieved

*from Hannon, (1970) p.218 - amended to correct computational error at ***

	Occupational Status of Current job (1968)			
	Farming	All non- manual	All manual	Total number
	Percentages quoted are of numbers in each cell who definitely or probably intend to remain at home			
Educational Level Achieved	%	%	%	
Primary	88 (16)	50 (6)*	34 (62)	84
Vocational	100 (5)	47 (30)	46 (54)	89
Secondary	80 (5)	16 (77)	25 (12)*	94
Total No.	(26)	(113)	(128)**	267

Note:A number of exceptional cases reduced the correlation between education received and occupation achieved. Six primary educated respondents entered non-manual occupations. One of these had taken up a partnership in a local small furniture manufacturing firm, two were employed as book-keepers in local shops; and one, an exceptionally intelligent girl, had emigrated to New York to take up a job as a waitress. She had made such a favourable impression on one of her customers, however, that she was taken into a stockbrokering firm to train as a receptionist.. A somewhat similar situation held in the case of some of the secondary educated who had taken up manual jobs. Some of these had to remain at home because of family obligations and had taken up manual employment to supplement a low income from the home farm (Hannon (1970) p218).

This presentation of the outcomes, together with the note, gives a very realistic general impression of the opportunity matrix within which young people operated during this period. Over half of the vocational school educated had taken up skilled manual occupations and only one in seven of the primary educated had done so. In addition, far more of the vocational group entered the lower level non-manual occupations which provided a better opportunity to remain locally than the lower manual occupations entered by the primary group. *'By and large, occupational selection explains the differences in migration behaviour between the primary and the vocational group'.*[23] However, differences of occupational destination between the vocational and secondary groups are even more striking. The majority of the vocational group took up jobs as office clerks and typists and almost all of them were girls. On the other hand, the secondary group entered a wider range of jobs - as bank clerks, policemen, laboratory technicians, reporters etc., and almost a third of them were boys. Many secondary girls had migrated to take up the same kind of occupation as the non-migrant vocational girls[24]. It is appropriate to quote more directly from Hannon for the remainder of the analysis:

> *The differences here were not concerned with the type of job taken up, but with the status of the firm worked with. Working as a clerk typist in a local firm, shop, solicitor's office or the county council, etc., does not appear as prestigious or attractive to the secondary educated girl as working in the same kind of job for a bank, the civil service etc., or with a national prestige firm such as Aer Lingus - (the national airline-B.O'R).*

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23 ibid, p218.

24 ibid, p219.

Many of these girls, in fact, when asked for their occupational aspirations, had specified the firm they wanted to work for, rather than the particular occupation desired. Besides this factor of firm prestige, however, almost two thirds of the secondary educated girls, as compared to less than one quarter of all others, had said that they would not remain at home permanently, even if they could fulfil all their occupational and consumption aspirations there. There appears to be a complex of aspirations and attitudes involved in the migration of the secondary educated girls, of which occupational prestige is only a part. They appear to be a deviant group in this respect, however. In the case of all others, if their occupational and consumption aspirations can be fulfilled locally they are nearly all likely to stay there. With this one exception, therefore, occupational selection explains the educational differences observed in migration.[25]

In summary, Hannon's data demonstrated that occupational achievement was closely related to education received, and that this close association explained the educational differentials in rural migration. Vocational school graduates were less likely to migrate than secondary school graduates; more of them remained in the local economy. Over four-fifths of the secondary educated entered non-manual occupations, compared to one third of the vocational and slightly more than one twentieth of the primary educated. With some minor exceptions (e.g. - in the case of secondary educated girls) differences in migration among education groups are due to corresponding differences in occupational opportunities).

While parallel data is not available in respect of urban settings this enhanced survival rate for rural vocational school graduates must colour our interpretations of the census data reported above in Table 7.12. It is not, however, unreasonable to conclude that the fact that in 1966 there were more 20-24 year olds in the country who were graduates of the vocational system than of the secondary system only, (29.1% as opposed to 28.3%) is due to: i) increased participation in continuation courses; ii) increased participation in technical courses by pupils transferring to Vocational schools, and iii) less emigration of vocational school graduates.

To the 1990's

The mid sixties were the period in which the VEC Continuation programme underwent most change. In the 1970's the Technical programmes were extended through the Regional Colleges and the Institutes of Technology.

The data collated by the Survey team appointed by the Minister for Education in 1962 and reported in '*Investment in Education,* (1965: 169) is the first empirical data in the Irish system that gives statistical evidence of the general nature of the division of labour in second-level education.
The data based on a survey of 2,114 boys and 1, girls 1,993 is presented in Figure 7.12[26]

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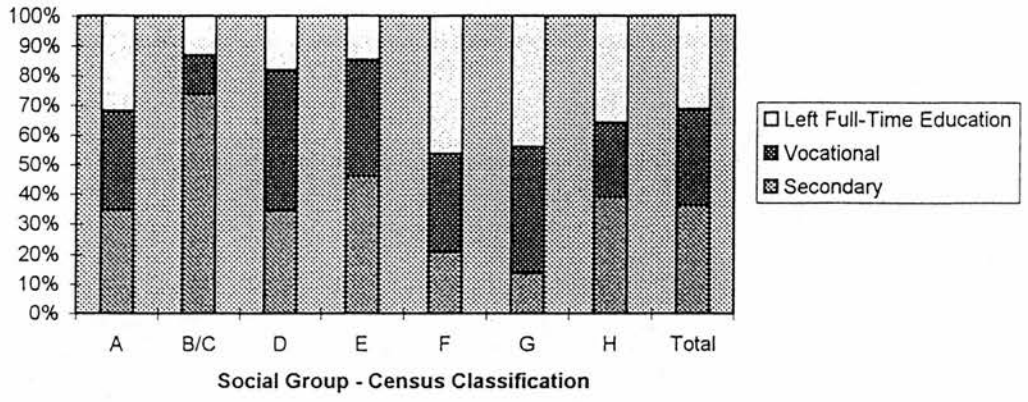
25 ibid.

26 See *Investment in Education*, Report of the Survey Team appointed by the Minister for Education, 1962 (Pr8311), p168-176 for details of the methodology of the study.

Fig.7.12
Percentage Distribution of Sample of National School Leavers, by Destination, 1963



Note:

A: Farmers;
B: Professional, employers and managers, senior salaried employees;
C: Intermediate Non-manual workers;
D: Other Non-manual workers;
F: Semi-skilled & unskilled workers;
G: No Occupation;
H: No Information[27]

Source:from 'Investment in Education (1965), p169

This survey shows a total of 30.9% of boys and 25.2% of girls had left schooling on completion of their primary education, that 32.2% of the boys and 26.3% of the girls went to vocational schools and that 48.5% of the girls and 36.9% of the boys went to secondary school courses in that year. The proportions who left school varied by social class with 10-13% of Professional and Managerial group (B&C) terminating their schooling and 45-46% of the children of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers not transferring beyond primary schooling.

Since 1966, a series of studies, [Hannon, (1968), Kelleghan & Greaney (1970), Greaney (1973), Swan (1978), Rottman and Hannon *et al.* (1982), Hannon and Breen *et al.* (1983), Breen (1986) Lynch (1987), and Hannon and Boyle (1987)] have shown the tendency for working class pupils to be over-represented in Vocational schools and the children of middle class parents, particularly upper middle class parents to be underrepresented there. The most recent data is in Hannon and Smyth *et al.* (1996) *from* which the following Figure 7.13 is derived:

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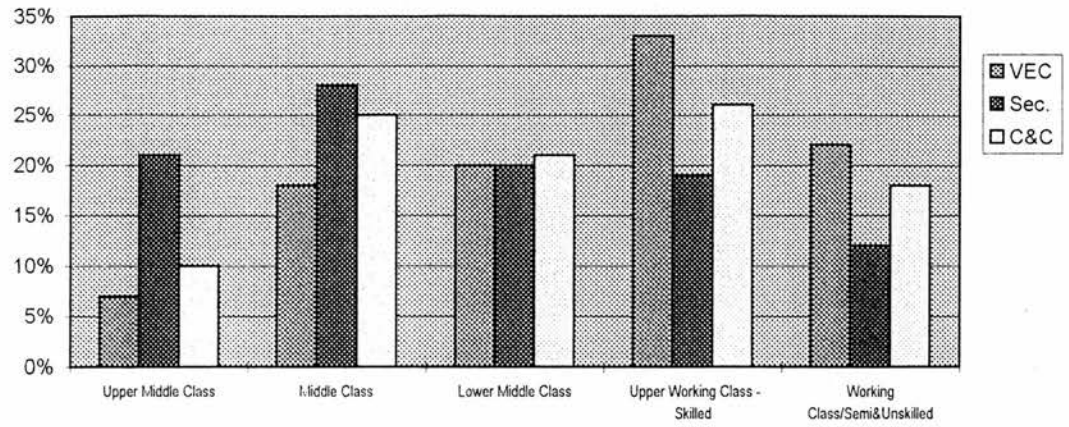
27 Details of the class categories are provide in *Investment in Education* Report, p148. C: Intermediate non-manual workers include business proprietors, bank clerks and civil servants below the rank of higher executive officer, shop assistants and policemen up to sergeant rank.

Fig. 7.13
Social Class Distribution by School Type at Third Year(Junior Cert.) Level, 1993-4



from Hannon et al. (1996), p.82

This data confirms the general perception of an uneven distribution of social classes between school types and the continued characterisation of the VEC institutions as for working class youth.[28] There is an over-representation of the children of skilled and unskilled parents in vocational schools and an under-representation of the children of middle class parents.

What emerges is major differences in the pupil characteristics of Vocational and Secondary Schools on each of the reported background and personal characteristics. Principals in the schools perceive more Vocational school pupils as having to contend with disadvantageous social circumstances. There were also personal differences, in that larger proportions of Vocational school pupils present with lower achievement scores on tests of verbal and numerical ability.[29] Differences are less pronounced between Vocational school and the newer Community and Comprehensive schools. In each of the presented characteristics, with the exception of 'Background Unemployment, +30%,' the school Principals report near equivalent levels of disadvantage.

The dual character of the VEC schools as working class and with a preponderance of the educational disadvantage in the system is confirmed. This characteristic was not totally confined to the second-level provision of the VEC system but is also a feature of the third level provision developed by VEC through the Regional Technical College system and City of Dublin VEC's Institute of Technology.

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28 A total of 5,771 cases were part of the 1993/4 National Survey on Coeducation reported in Hannon et al (1996). Social class categories are based on the 1986 Census of Population, of paternal/maternal (whichever is higher) occupational status. Only the data relating to Co-ed Secondary schools are included. The authors suggest *'class polarisation is not a co-ed phenomenon per se'*. See Hannon et al (1996), p81-2.

In 1967/68, 1,202 students of the total 21,723 who were in 'Higher Education', were in VEC run institutions. This represented 5.5% of the total, with 77.7% enrolled in universities and the remainder in colleges of education and other institutions. In 1992/93, at the point at which the VEC role in these institutions was terminated by legislation, they enrolled 32,849 students, or 39% of the total 84,140 higher education students in the state. The VEC 'Technological Sector' had grown by an extraordinary 2,630% over the twenty-five year period.[30] The social selectivity of higher education as a whole, (Clancy, 1995: 45-77) is complemented by an internal selectivity that operates between the sectors of higher education and reflects and continues in muted form the patterns of second level provision. Those socio-economic groups which are significantly under represented in higher education as a whole, had their highest representation within the RTCs.

In particular, Unskilled Manual Workers represent 1.8% of university and 5,2% of RTC new entrants in 1992, whereas, the children of Higher Professionals represented 14% of university and 4.1% of RTC entrants in the same year.[31]

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29 See Appendix 3 of Hannon et al (1996) for the data on which Figure 9.3 is based.

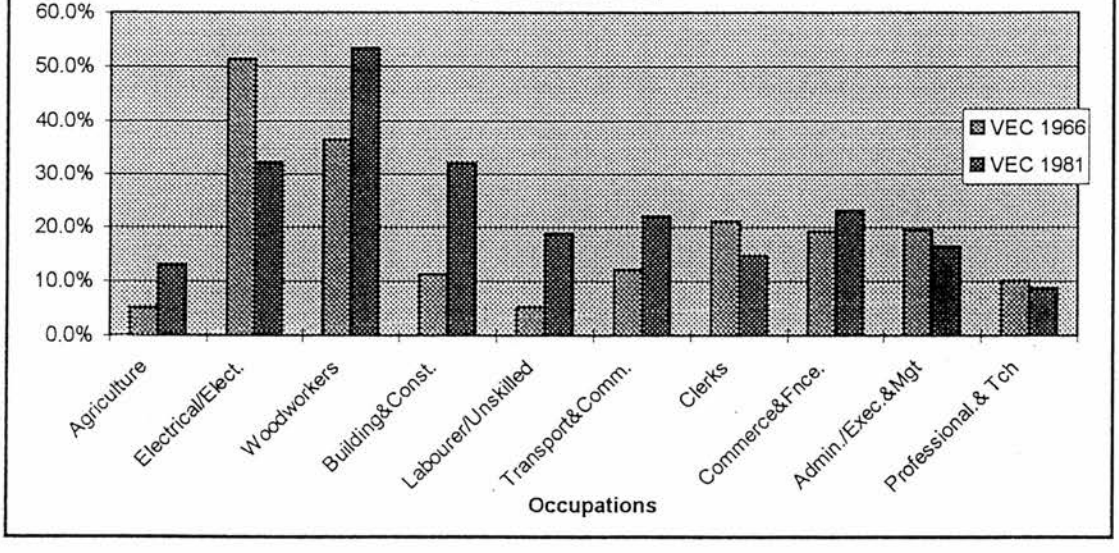
30 See Clancy, P (1995) '*Access to College: Patterns of Continuity and Change*', Dublin: Higher Education Authority, Table 2, p12.

31 ibid, Table 18, p62.

Occupational Destinations 1966 & 1981 Census Data

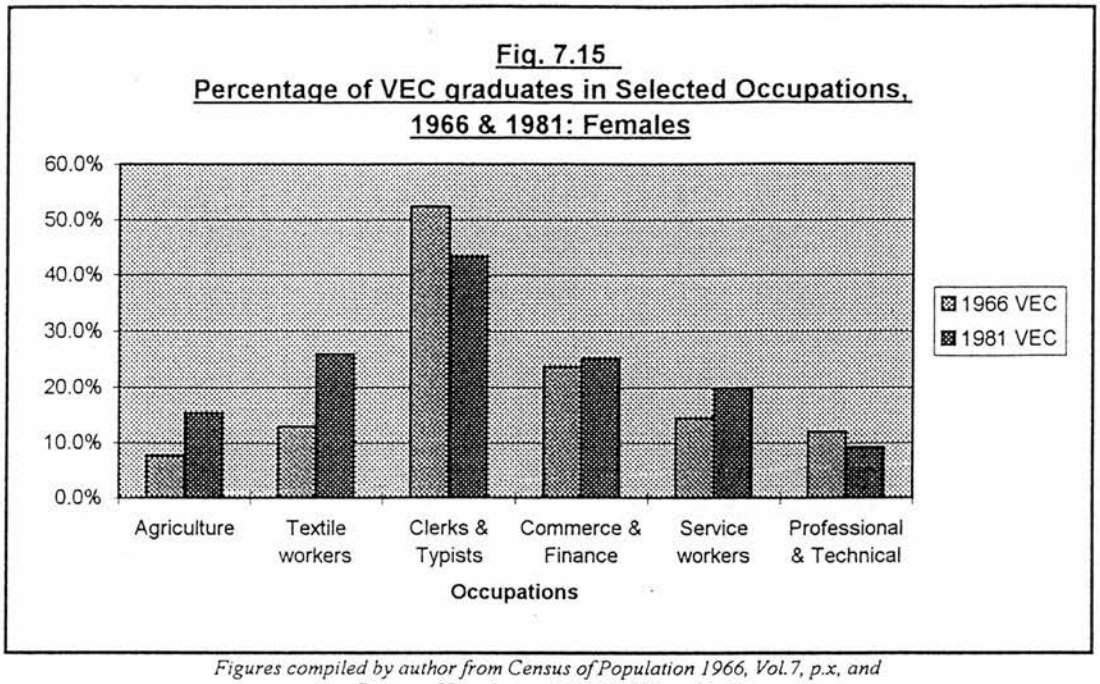
The 1966 Census data allowed us to examine the occupational output of the VEC system in the period from the 1930's to the 1960's. A comparison between the 1966 and 1981 Census data allows the net effects of twenty-five years of education on the occupational output of the vocational school system. The comparison is presented in graphic form in Figure 7.14 below.[32] Examining the data in respect of male occupations, it is apparent that in the twenty-five years intervening between 1966 and 1981, the proportion of VEC graduates in skilled electrical occupations declined from 51% to 32% of the total[33]. Only in woodworking occupations were VEC graduates in a majority in the occupation; in the twenty-five year period the VEC graduates increased from 36% to 53% of the total.

Fig. 7.14
Percentage of VEC Graduates in Selected Occupations, 1966 &1981: Males



32 The data published in the 1991 Census volume on Education (Vol.9), do not allow a replication of the analysis. In the 1991 volume the data on occupation and social category is related to education, not by providing sector (i.e. Vocational or Secondary) but by *level of education*, i.e. Lower Secondary, Upper Secondary, Third Level. These categories reflect the structural reforms which had as a core objective the creation of a unified post-primary or secondary system in which the distinctions between vocational school post-primary and secondary school post-primary were not of significance from the point of view of economic planning and human capital development

33 This is reflected in the Lysaght interview. When asked if apprentice students sent their children to the vocational school he replied: *'An awful lot of them. But the Fitters and the Electricians, no, they were management class and weren't sent back to us at all...'*



Figures compiled by author from Census of Population 1966, Vol.7, p.x, and Census of Population, 1981, Vol.10, p.50-51

The VEC proportion of those in male Clerical employment, working in Administration and Executive level management, and in the Professional and Technical Occupations, all declined. The proportions grew among Construction workers, Unskilled workers and in Transport occupations. Among females (Figure 7.15) VEC graduates declined as a proportion of the total, from 53% to 43% among Clerks & Typists. There was also a slight decline in the already low proportion of (VEC) women graduates who were in Professional or Technical Occupations. The largest proportional increase was among Textile workers, from 13% to 26%. The other areas in which VEC graduates registered an increase was in Service work and in Agricultural occupations.

More recent data on the relationship between occupation and schooling or education achievement reflects the re-organisation of Irish educational certification at the second level and does not make any distinction between the types of institution.

Female/Male Distribution

An examination of the distribution of the sexes in the VEC wholetime courses brings another set of characteristics to light. The rural Vocational School was providing a service to a greater number of young women. As can be seen from Table 7.18, young women outnumbered young men in all wholetime VEC courses, up to the 1948 school year. This overall picture was composed of quite contrasting elements; men outnumbered women in City and Town schemes, except for the later years of World War II when male

enrolment dropped dramatically. In the rural schemes, however, females at all times outnumbered the young men, at times by fifty percent and more. This characteristic is one of the less well known features of the first decades of the VEC system, attracting little or no public comment.[34] The shifting balance, which is evident in the later years, continues, so that by 1962, girls enrolment is seventy-seven percent of the enrolment of boys in wholetime continuation classes in vocational schools. By 1972, the number of girls is but 56% that of the boys.[35]

Table 7.18

Female/Male Ratios in Whole-time VEC Courses, 1932/33-1949/50.

Year	Males County	Females County	County Ratio	Males Town &City	Females Town &City	Town & City Ratio	Total Males	Total Females	F/M Ratio Total
1932	1841	2737	**149%**	2525	2070	**82%**	4366	4807	**110%**
1933	2362	3078	**130%**	2690	2098	**78%**	5052	5176	**102%**
1934	2923	3911	**134%**	2615	2360	**90%**	5538	6271	**113%**
1935	3057	4190	**137%**	2948	2402	**81%**	6005	6592	**110%**
1936	3074	4343	**141%**	3165	2556	**81%**	6239	6899	**111%**
1937	3265	4571	**140%**	3427	2555	**75%**	6692	7126	**106%**
1938	3581	4715	**132%**	3550	2683	**76%**	7131	7398	**104%**
1939	3569	5064	**142%**	3578	2852	**80%**	7147	7916	**111%**
1940	3760	5278	**140%**	3350	2546	**76%**	7110	7824	**110%**
1941	3445	5544	**161%**	2613	2582	**99%**	6058	8126	**134%**
1942	3060	4963	**162%**	2566	2623	**102%**	5626	7586	**135%**
1943	3025	4785	**158%**	2590	2625	**101%**	5615	7410	**132%**
1944	3087	4869	**158%**	3019	3127	**104%**	6106	7996	**131%**
1945	3481	4900	**141%**	3071	2870	**93%**	6552	7770	**119%**
1946	3746	4874	**130%**	2919	2627	**90%**	6665	7501	**113%**
1947	4123	4821	**117%**	2988	2839	**95%**	7111	7660	**108%**
1948	4756	5219	**110%**	3436	2919	**85%**	8192	8138	**99%**
1949	5506	5733	**104%**	3840	2899	**75%**	9346	8632	**92%**
Percent. Change	**199%**	**109%**		**52%**	**40%**		**114%**	**80%**	

Source: Department of Education Reports, 1932/33-1949-50

Participation in the whole-time day courses in VEC schools was examined up to the end of the 1940's and the first two decades of operation of the VEC schools. The general picture that emerges was one of a larger number of female to male pupils in every year with the ratio rising to its most divergent in the war years, 1941-45. Within this picture, a divergence between county schemes as town/city schemes was evident.

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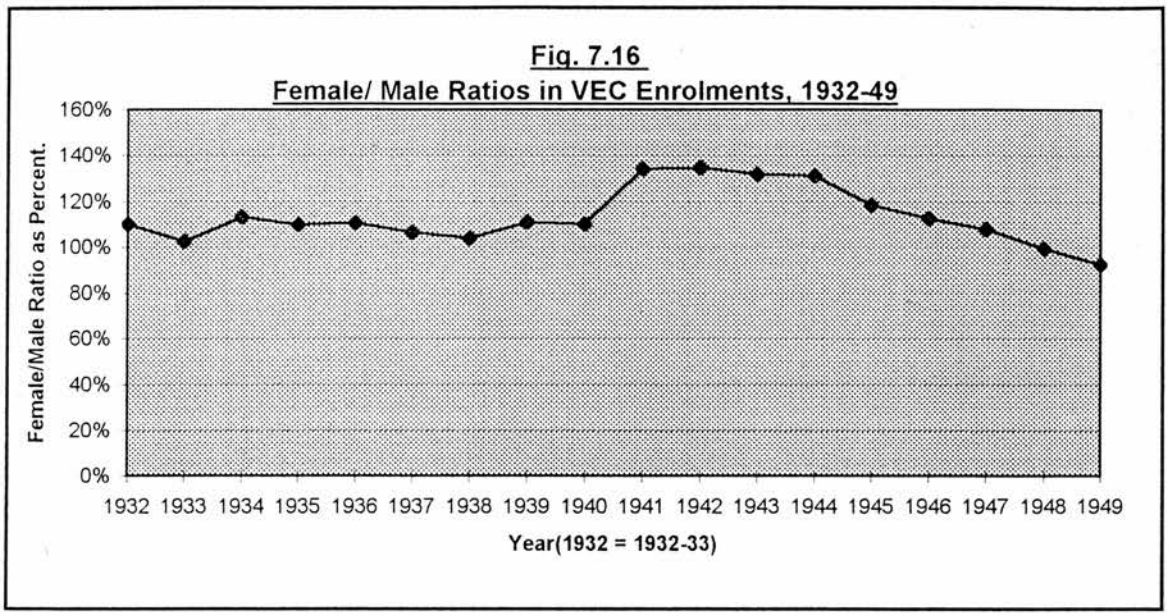
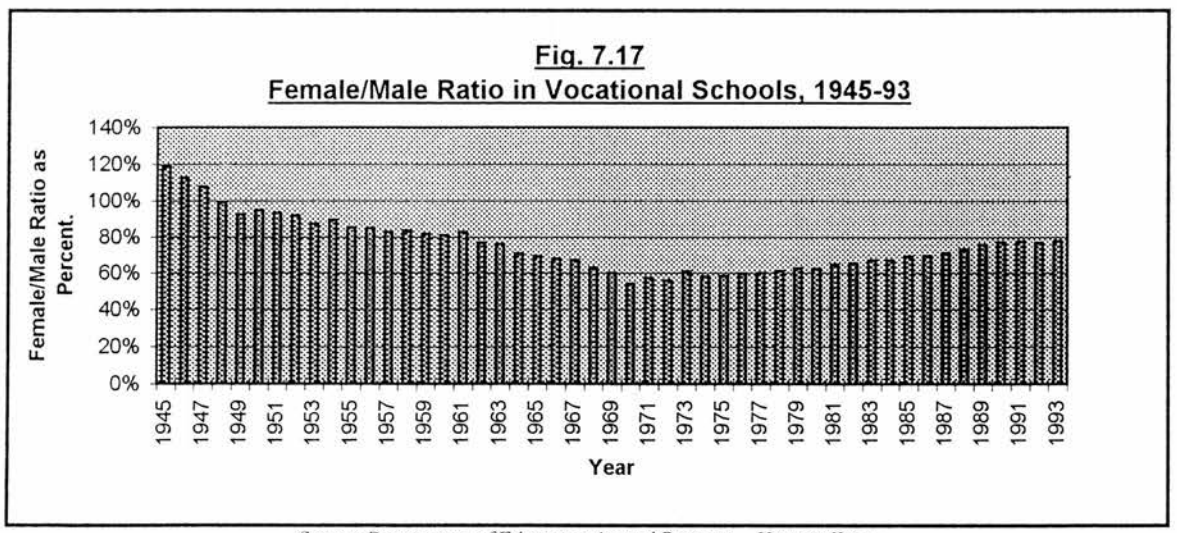
34 See references to vocational education for young women at ITIA/IVEA Congresses: See for example Miss Foster's paper to the 1926 Congress, 'Women's Employment'.

35 See appendix 1. The proportions cited are calculated by the author from data in the *Reports of the Department of Education*, 1972/3-1973/4, p51 & 1962/3, p137. In calculating the 1972 ratios, 4158 girls attending secretarial courses are included. If these are excluded, then the proportion of girls to boys attending general courses in Vocational schools in 1972/73 is 46%.

The county schemes had female majorities each year, with large female ratios, (in excess of 50% in excess of males for 1941-1944.



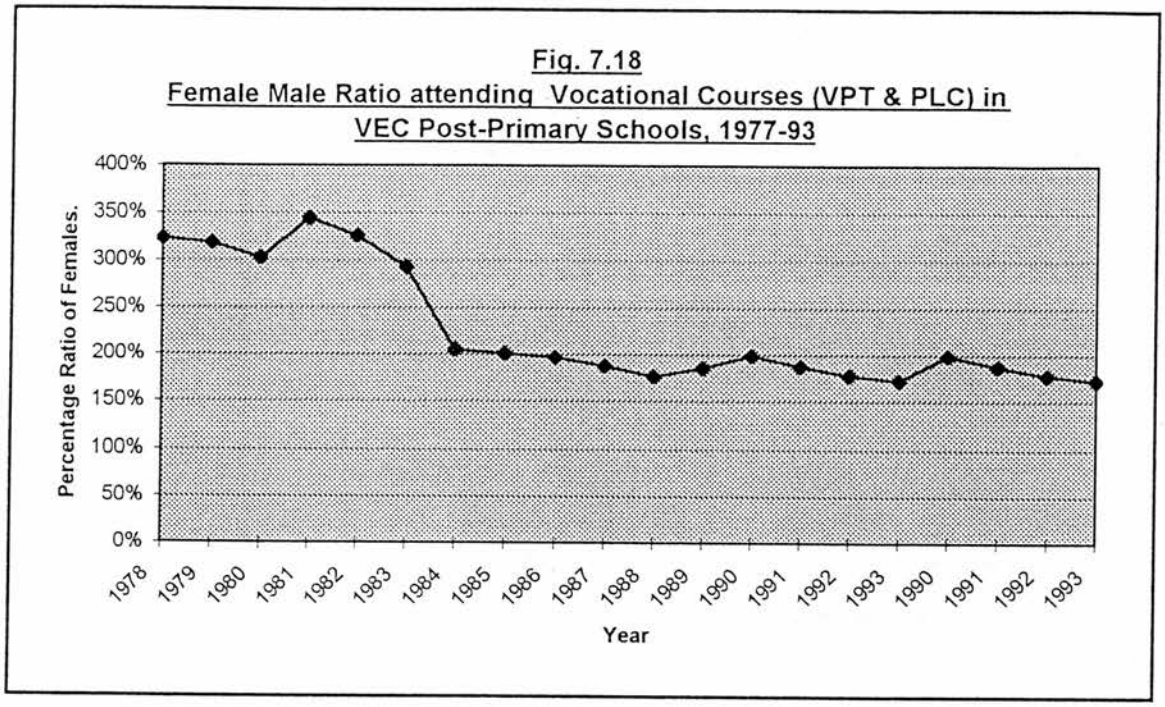
The town/city schemes had male majorities except during the war years when enrolment was sensitive to unskilled youth employment opportunities. Overall, it is evident from Figure 7.17 that after 1945 the vocational school option does not continue to be as attractive for young women as heretofore.



Source:Department of Education Annual Reports: Various Years

From being a significant majority in 1945, young women become a decided minority in 1970, reaching a low point of being but fifty-four percent (54%) of the number of young men in vocational schools. In the same period, the change in gender distribution in secondary schools was much less dramatic because of the larger absolute numbers. In 1945, young women constituted forty-five percent of those attending

secondary schools; by 1970, they were in the majority, being fifty-five percent of the total.[36] Figure 7.17 indicates an increase in the ratio of females to males in Vocational schools after 1977. Further analysis carried out by the author identifies the contribution of females in vocational courses to the more recent ratios. The ratio which varied downward from 3: 1 to 1.7: 1 is illustrated in Figure 7.18.



Gender imbalances in VEC Third level provision were not as pronounced. Participation patterns were examined in higher education for the first time in 1980 when Clancy conducted a study of first time entrants into such institutions. (Clancy, 1982). University entrants in that year consisted of 5,513 persons, of whom 52.3% were male and 47.7 were female. In the VEC sector of third level provision, the balance among entrants to the new Regional Technical colleges was not dissimilar, with 49% males and 51% females. In the institutions under the remit of City of Dublin VEC, however, the overall balance was 65% males and 35% females.

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36 The data is as follows: **1945:** Boys 23,016; Girls 18,783; **1970:** Boys 68,463; Girls 82,197. See Department of Education Report, 1945, p132, Table 1, and Dept. of Education Report 1970, p30, Table 30.
In the annual reports in 1945/46, (p140), 69 primary schools were approved to provide instruction in the Secondary curriculum, in accordance *'with the terms of Section XII of the Secondary School Programme'*. 4,374 pupils received instruction in these 'Secondary Tops' as they were known; 4,374, or 92% of these pupils were girls. In 1970, there were 22 such schools, with, 3,351 pupils, of whom, 3,030or 90%, were girls. (Department of Education Report for 1968-72, p38. See below Chapters 10 & 11 for a further discussion of 'Secondary Tops' in the development of Irish education provision.

Table 7.19

VEC Third Level Entrants -Gender Ratios, 1980, 1992

	1980		1992	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
D.I.T	65%	35%	55.6%	44.4%
RTCs	49%	51%	57.6%	42.4%
Total	53%	47%	57%	43%

Adapted by the author from Clancy (1982), Table 1 & Clancy (1995), Table A2

By 1992, the gender balance among RTC entrants was 57.6% male and 42.4% female, with a similar, 55.6% male and 44.6% female in the Dublin City VEC institutions. These ratios reverse those of the university institutions with a majority of women, 53.2%, to 46.8% of men among their first entrants.[37]

Summary

The Chapter charts the growth of the system and offers the following conclusions:

- The relative proportions of VEC wholetime post-primary provision has remained remarkably stable over the total period.
- Enrolment in VEC institutions has been more sensitive to changing economic circumstances than secondary school enrolments.
- The period 1960-1970 saw a rapid change in the levels and range of VEC educational activity
- The origins and destinations of VEC students have been significantly differentiated from those of secondary school students.
- VEC students occupied an intermediate position between secondary school students and those with primary schooling only, in respect of emigration behaviour.
- The utilisation of the VEC system by girls and young women has undergone significant change over the period.

In this Chapter, 9(b) Department of Education statistics, Census data and other research reports have been utilised to develop a characterisation of VEC students for the period 1930-1990.

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37 Interestingly, the 'technological' University of Limerick, had a ratio in line with the VEC institutions:52.4% male, and 47.6% emale. From Clancy (1995), Table A2, p180-181.

It is clear that gender related enrolment in VEC institutions has been the subject of considerable change over the period of the study. The data presented here, indicate a clearly segmented educational provision, with occupational origins and occupational destinations clearly associated with educational experience.

CHAPTER 8

THE VECs AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PERCEPTIONS AND RHETORIC

Introduction

In this Chapter the operation of the VEC system in relation to its economic environment will be examined. The theoretical basis of the examination has been explored in Chapter 3. The relative significance of the economic function of the VEC system has at all times been explicit. The title 'Vocational Education' made that inescapable. At the head of Chapter 3 Halsey's salutary warning is carried:

> *Educational systems stand in complex relation to modern economies. They manifest remarkable shifts in adaptation to changing circumstances...and they still defy adequate analysis by social scientists*[1].

In order to explore the complex relations, the interview data gathered for this study will be set alongside the quantitative data already used in this and succeeding Chapters. The Vocational Education Committee system was established as a major human resource development agency of the new Irish State. Although the terminology of 'human resource development' was not utilised in the course of the establishment and the early decades of development of the VEC system, an examination of the language used in respect of the system in these early decades reveals a perspective consistent with this conception of education's economic purpose. The VEC system in Ireland was established within the frame of the state's larger education system of primary (elementary), secondary and university institutions. It has continued to exist, with only minor statutory modifications, for the period 1930 to date.

The Irish Economy

We have identified the development of economic policy in independent Ireland as having five phases, characterised by the broad approach adapted to its condition as a "small open economy."[2] Phase 1, 1922-32, when the relationship with the British economy was accepted and development for the newly independent state was sought within that framework: Phase 2, 1932-1939, when a nationalist economic policy attempted to end the dependence on British trade and to develop an independent

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1 From Halsey, A.H., (1990), 'Education Systems and the Economy' in Martinelli & Smelser, (ed.) Economy and Society, London:Sage, p.100.

economy, in an independent state. Phase 3, 1939-1958 was a reluctant return to the earlier acceptance of the "dominant feature" of major dependence on British markets. The years 1958-73 initiated a fourth Phase, in which government strove to integrate the Irish economy with the larger European and world economy and so to generate growth. The current phase starts with the 1973 oil crisis and continues to 1990 - and beyond and is characterised by the efforts to respond to the difficulties for growth created by the state of the European and global economy. The 'openness' of the Irish economy delimited the scope for policy intervention and narrowed the range of policy instruments available to Irish governments in attempting to manage the economy.

The first of the economic phases, from 1922-1932, the period of office of the first native government, coincided with the period of education review and reform which led, among another initiatives, to the Vocational Education Act 1930. A number of strands of economic policy have been identified for that period. Firstly, there was 'economic nationalism' which presented independence for the Free State as an opportunity to put Irish rather than British priorities in the dominant place in policy formulation. Secondly, there was in fiscal policy a 'triumph of continuity' between the pre-Revolutionary Ireland and the new Free State. The combined effects of a civil service largely recruited from the pre-Revolutionary incumbents, a recognition of the dominance of the British market for Irish exports and a need to establish the credentials of the new administration as being capable of economic self-rule, are all seen as contributing to the economic continuity in change. Thirdly, there was the centrality of the agricultural community, who had, for the most part, recently become property owners and constituted fifty-three percent of the labour force. Finally, there was the incipient policy of industrialisation as evidenced in such large-scale state ventures as the Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme.

Contestation in economic policy focused on two major issues. The first was 'economic nationalism' and the extent to which the fledgling state could break its economic ties with Britain and establish an autonomous economy responsive to its own need. The second was the relative desirability and feasibility of basing plans for economic development on agriculture and the creation of wealth through family farms or by developing an indigenous industrial base with its consequent urbanisation and movement away from rural living.

Education and Economy

Our review of the economic functions of education (see above Chapter 3) suggested that three dimensions of the functioning of an education system in respect of manpower development for the economy warrant examination. These are:

i) the education system and the formation of productive skills;
ii) the education system and the 'sorting' or allocation of human resources;
iii) the education system and the regulation of unemployment.

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[2] See Chapter 5.

We shall present in this Chapter data in respect of the role of the VEC system in these processes. We shall also examine the understandings, (shifting over the time-span of 1930-1990) which were used to explain, justify, legitimate, mobilise support for, and to restrict the VECs in relation to these processes. While a consideration of the social and distributional consequences of the operation of these processes is not our immediate concern in this Chapter, it is proposed to examine the changing rhetoric used in the Irish discourse about the economic role of vocational education.

Phase 1

Transitions to the VEC System

The Technical Instruction Act, 1889, and The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, had established a system of technical instruction in the island of Ireland. This legislation, enacted by the Westminster parliament, gave a structure and provided finance for a system of technical training in Ireland in a manner designed to parallel those being developed in Britain and on the Continent.[3] The earlier act applied to the whole of the United Kingdom and Ireland. The spread of industrialisation in Europe was strikingly marked by the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Paris Exhibition of 1867. Technical education had been systematically organised by the state in many European countries: Denmark (1814), Belgium (1831), Sweden (1849), Switzerland (1855), Prussia (1859), Netherlands (1863) and Norway in 1869.[4] Part of the British analysis was that Britain's lack of 'good systems of industrial training for the masters and managers of factories' and a 'want of technical education in England' were major reasons for the country's economic decline.[5] Up to the passing of the 1889 act it could be said that Ireland participated in the debates and in the explorations of technical education as part of the larger United Kingdom. Thus the first Mechanics Institute was established in Dublin in 1837 some fourteen years after the establishment of the London Mechanics Institute, and in 1857, the grants of the South Kensington Department of Science and Art, established in 1853, were being utilised by institutions in Ireland.[6] In short it can be argued that technical education in Ireland developed along structures that were generally similar to those employed in England.[7]

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3 Technical Instruction Act, 1989, 52 & 53 Vict. c.76; Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, 62 & 63 Vict. c.50. The most comprehensive study of the Technical Instruction System, its origins in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and establishment during the political turbulence of the last decades of the nineteenth century, is contained in Byrne, K. (1982) The Origin and Growth of Technical Education in Ireland, 1731-1922, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University College, Cork, (N.U.I.). See also Coolahan (1981) opcit. pp83-96. For the perceptions that guided the 1930 reforms see Saorstat Eireann, Commission on Technical Education Report, pp1-36. Coffey, D. (1992) Schools and Work: Developments in Vocational Education, London, Cassell, provides an account of the development of vocational education in England. For the period to 1922, see pp9-119.

4 For data on state initiatives in education in Western European countries, see Flora, P (1983) State ,Economy and Society in Western Europe, 1815-1975,

5 Dr. Playfair, an international juror at the Paris Exhibition wrote in these terms to Lord Taunton, then presiding over a Schools Enquiry Commission . See Coffey (1992), opcit., p46 and Argles, M. (1964), South Kensington to Robbins: An Account of English Technical and Scientific Education since 1851, London:Longman p26.

6 See Coolahan, (1985), opcit. p104 and Durcan, (1972), opcit., pp126 ff.

7 See Byrne, (1982) opcit., p152.

Conceptual Development

The debates of the nineteenth century initiated discussions of matters which remained central issues and have continued to arise in respect of technical and vocational education down to the last decade of the twentieth century. Thus questions about the need for an appropriate *prior general education* on which vocational or technical education would build, is a recurring theme. So too is the question of the relative role of *specialist institutions* for the delivery of technical education as opposed to the inclusion of scientific and technical studies into the curricula of other institutions, i.e., primary, secondary or university institutions.

A third recurring question revolves around the relative place to be given to *generalist technical education* as education in the 'principles of art and science as applied to industry or agriculture', on the one hand, as opposed to *more work specific training* such as manual instruction or training in specific craft skill, on the other hand. The changing nature of skilled employment in the twentieth century has meant that terminology around this issue has changed in many countries. As we shall see, the legal definitions in Ireland have altered little in the course of the twentieth century. In terms of legal terminology, the defining moments were over in 1930.[8]

Much of the debate on these matters in the nineteenth century took place at the royal commissions and the committees of enquiry established to examine education questions. Up to the passing of the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, the discussion pertinent to technical education in Ireland took place in the Westminister committees and commissions.[9] So we find that one of the formulations of technical education which continues to have a strong presence into the 1930 Vocational Education Act receives its first expressions in evidence to the 1872 (Devonshire) Commission of Enquiry Into Scientific Instruction And The Advancement Of Science. To that commission a witness is reported as offering the definition of technical education as: 'general instruction in those sciences, the principles of which are applicable to various specified employments in life...excluding the manual instruction in arts and manufactures which is given in the workshops'.[10] This is the definition that makes its way, with minor amendment, into the first legislation on technical education passed for England, Ireland and Wales.[11]

The definition used in the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, indicates an intention to focus on the application of science and art to industry and the avoidance of any direct preparation for specific employment's:

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8 It is curious that the Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992 does not contain a definition of 'technical education'.

9 The following are the main sites of the discussion referred to:Clarendon Commission Report, 1864; Taunton Commission Report 1868, Select Committee on Technical Instruction 1868 (Samuelson Committee), (Elementary Education Act 1870); 1872 Royal Commission to Enquire into Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science. (The Devonshire Commission Report 1875; 1880, Establishment of City and Guilds of London Institute for the Advancement of Technical Education; 1881, Second Samuelson Commission - Report 1884.

10 From Coffey (1992), opcit., p52

11 Legislation for technical education in Scotland, the Technical Schools (Scotland) Act, was passed in 1887. Anderson (1983), p210 reports that it 'remained virtually unused'. For conflicting evidence see Dowling, PJ., (1909), 'A Plea for Continuation Education' in

The expression 'technical instruction' shall mean instruction in the principles of science and art applicable to industries and in the application of special branches of science and art to specific industries and employments.

It shall not include teaching the practice of any trade or industry or employment...
The expression 'manual instruction' shall mean instruction in the use of tools, processes of agriculture, and modeling in clay, wood or other material

Technical Instruction Act, 1889

The definitions contained in the 1899 Act which related only to Ireland, retain the wording of the earlier legislation but with significant modifications.

The expression 'technical instruction' means instruction in the principles of science and art applicable to industries, and in the application of special branches of science and art applicable to specific industries and employments.
It shall not include instruction given in elementary schools or teaching in the practice of any trade or industry or employment...
... but shall include instruction in...modern languages and commercial subjects.....
...and shall also include instruction in the use of tools, and modelling in clay, wood and other material.

Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act, 1899.

The distinction between 'manual instruction' and 'technical instruction' is now elided and technical instruction includes "instruction in the use of tools, and modelling in clay, wood and other material." Secondly, the new definition excludes instruction in the "processes of agriculture" from the remit of the technical instruction committees. However, a significant addition is the specific reference to instruction in "modern languages and commercial subjects."[12] Finally, the structural distinction made in the 1899 definition between "instruction given in elementary schools" and technical instruction is significant. This distinction is continued into the era of the VECs and the relationship between the respective roles of the elementary or primary school system and the technical/vocational system, remains important.[13]

Byrne (1982) makes the point that while the chief impediment to the development of technical education in England in the nineteenth century was the lack of an elementary education system (up to 1851) in Ireland no such impediment existed. A state system of elementary education had been established in 1831. The chief impediment in Ireland, he suggests, was the lack of industrialisation. "In the absence of an industrial base, technical education was faced with the twin tasks of stimulating and serving industry at once."[14] Cullen (1972 &1987) reports a feeling of foreboding in Irish industry with the sense of industrial decline pervasive everywhere outside the northeast and Belfast.[15] A survey of Irish industry in 1911 shows two-thirds of firms in or around the major cities of Belfast or Dublin,

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'Irish Ecclesiastical Record', Vol.26, p146-152, which cites exemplary provision in Scotland. The matter is worthy of further examination.

12 One might speculate on the extent to which the increasing influence of Catholic business interests in the public life of the island during the 1890's led to the inclusion of commercial studies; it will be noted that commercial studies, and later Irish language teaching, come to dominate the work of the committees.
See data below p13, Table 8.1(c).

13 Another characteristic, or set of characteristics, which the VEC system carried from the 1889 legislation is the role of the local authorities in the funding and governance of technical / vocational education. See Chapter 10.

14 Byrne (1982), opcit., p153.

and half in what would become Northern Ireland.[16] Ireland remained '*...an overwhelmingly rural country not only in demographic but even more so in mental terms*', according to Hoppen (1989); '*A strong ruralism was shared by landlords, priests, romantic nationalists, and men of letters and constituted a unifying thread amidst many splinterings of Irish life*'[17].

The Commission on Technical Instruction and The Vocational Education Act, 1930

In 1926, within three years of the founding of the state, a radical review of an existing 'technical instruction' system was deemed necessary by the Minister for Education. He established a commission of experts "*to enquire into and advise upon the system of Technical Education in Saorstat Eireann in relation to the requirements of Trade and Industry.*"[18]

In addressing the opening session of the Commission, the Minister for Education, Professor John Marcus O'Sullivan referred to the "*industrial and economic progress that may be expected to result from the Shannon Electricity scheme and other recent and pending industrial developments...*" suggesting that the "*.. government should have the fullest information on the present and probable need of the country in the matter of Technical Instruction...*"[19]

Addressing the Commission, Mr. R.C. Ferguson, Director, Industries Branch, Department of Industry and Commerce, identified the 'problem in the Saorstat' as one of '*... reviving the older industries in this country and of establishing new industries...*' The solution was to be two-fold. Firstly, '*... those responsible for the control of industry should so organise themselves and so develop their business along the lines adopted in competing countries that they can hope to produce articles of as good quality, in comparable variety, at the same or a lower price. This means higher technical education among employers...* 'Mr. Ferguson's second remedy was '*... proper technical training for the*

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15 Cullen, (1972&1987) 'An Economic History of Ireland since 1660', London: Batsford, p150.

16 O'Grada, C. (1994), Ireland, A New Economic History, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p313. The survey in question was carried out by the Dept. of Agriculture and Technical Instruction which was established under the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act, 1899. O'Grada calculates that less than half (44%) of gross industrial output in Ireland in 1907-11 was attributable to the 26-county area which was to become the Free State.

17 Hoppen, K.T., (1989), Ireland since 1800: Conflict and Conformity, Harlow, Longmans, p104.

18 Tems of Reference for the Commission on Technical Education. See Report of the Commission on Technical Education (1927) Dublin; The Stationery Office, pvii. The Commission was chaired by Mr. John Ingram, B.E.,A.R.C.Sc.I., Senior Inspector of Technical Instruction, Dept. of Education, (Free State). It included the President of the Federal Technicum, Zurich, Switzerland, Prof. Dr. A. Rohn, and Mr. Nils Fredriksson, a member of the Swedish Board of Education and of the Board of Governors of the Royal Technical High School, Stockholm, Sweden, two members of the national legislature, lower house (Dail), Mr. John Good, T.D. representing Dublin County. Mr. Good was elected to the Irish Parliament (Dail) in 1923 representing the 'Businessmen's Party' and in 1927, 1932 & 1933, as an Independent. His electoral campaigns were supported by Dublin Protestant and Unionist organisations. See Maguire, M., 'The organisation and Activism of Dublin's Protestant working class, 1883-1935.' in Irish Historical Studies, xxix, No. 13, May, 1994, p p65-87). Mr. Hugh Colohan, T.D. a Labour Party member for Kildare. Other members were Mr. John J. O'Connor, Headmaster, Technical School, Mallow, Co. Cork, Miss Brighid Stafford, M.A. Dept. of Industry and Commerce, Mr. Walter Doolin, B.A., Dept of Finance, and Mr. Timothy O'Connell, F.R.C.Sc.I, Dept. of Lands and Agriculture. Mr. Robert O'Connor of the Technical Instruction Branch, Dept of Education, acted as Secretary to the commission. The Commission held its inaugural meeting on October 5th, 1926 and reported on 5th October 1927. (Source: Report of the Commission, pvi, vii, & p152.) T.D. stands for 'Teachta Dala', Irish for 'Member of Parliament'. For data on Good and Colahan see Walker, B.M., Parliamentary Election Results in Ireland, 1918-1992, Dublin & Belfast; Royal Irish Academy & the Institute of Irish Studies, 1992, pp111, 127 & 128.

19 Letter dated 30/9/1926 read at the inaugural meeting of the Commission, 5/10/1926. Report of the Commission (1926) pvii-ix.

workers....'[20] Mr. Ferguson identified a shortage of skilled workers as existing in a number of industries. He also recommended that '*... consideration should be given to widely extended training in connection with all branches of the electrical industry and in the modern applications of electricity*'.[21] His assessment of the impact of technical instruction to date was not very complementary. Only the typographical trade had made any regulations in respect of technical instruction for apprentices. There was little evidence that employers had taken seriously the importance of technical instruction. Craft unions were the primary instigators and supporters of technical training for their members and generally '*... the various rules governing the conditions of apprentices does not show that much, if any, value is at present attached to apprentices attending technical classes*'.[22] The Minister had been even more blunt when he spoke to the Annual Congress of the Irish Technical Instruction Association in Killarney earlier that year. '*Apprenticeship here*', he said, '*is on a slipshod basis. The apprentice is not taught a trade; he does not learn it; he merely picks it up. To solve the problem of apprenticeship there must be close co-operation between Capital and Labour, and there must be a closer connection between the schools and industry....*'[23]

Ferguson had suggested to the commission that

> *the problem would not appear to be incapable of solution if it is remembered that possibly the initiative which is taken by private concerns in their own interests would have to be supplied here by the central Government, helped by the Education Authorities, and plans made to organise both the workers and employers in the several industries so as to have the fullest possible benefit not only of their advice but of their active co-operation in making effective whatever schemes were planned. It does not appear to be enough to offer technical instruction, however wisely planned, unless steps are taken to cast some duties and responsibility on the workers and employers in each industry in an effort to see that the technical training afforded is, in fact, achieving the object for which it was designed, namely, to raise the standard of technical training throughout the country with resulting effects on the standard of output.*[24]

The Minister, however, in his Killarney speech was quite forthright about his response in respect of technical instruction. '*A proper system of technical instruction for the country*', he said, '*would undoubtedly be very costly and it is questionable whether the nation could afford it*'. Indicating a dominant line of thought, he went on: '*There is much that is good in the present system of technical instruction, but the unfortunate thing was that their schemes were not availed of to a greater extent by the boys and girls of the country.*' He then proceeded to put forward the point around which a consensus was converging: '*Owing to the necessities of the case, too much attention on the part of the Technical Schools has to be paid to doing Primary School work.... It was unfair to throw on Technical committees this work, but up to the present it was unavoidable*'.[25] George Fletcher, Assistant Secretary, Department of Education (Technical Instruction Branch), speaking at the same congress, identified two '*formidable obstacles*' to the work of technical committees as: i) the non-

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20 Minutes of Evidence to the Commission on Technical Education, Volume 1. Archive of the Dept. of Education, Dublin.
21 ibid.
22 ibid.
23 Report of the Twenty-second Congress of the Irish Technical Instruction Association, Killarney, 1926 p19.
24 Minutes of Evidence to the Commission (1927) Ferguson, p2.
25 Report of the Twenty-second Congress of the Irish Technical Instruction Association, Killarney, 1926 p19.

existence of a fund for the building of technical schools and ii) the educational unpreparedness of those seeking admission to Technical Schools.[26]

The Report of the Commission which was published in 1927 contains a conceptualisation of technical education in which three sub-categories are identifiable as requiring separate provision. The first was 'continuation education' for 14-16 year old young people who are not attending secondary school and was to be provided, for the most part, on a wholetime basis. A three-way differentiation is outlined within continuation education; between that to be provided in 'county borough' areas - the major cities - that to be provided in urban areas or large towns, and that to be provided in county or rural areas. The second sub-category took the old title 'technical education' which is education in relation to employment and includes training as part of apprenticeships and training for specific employments. The third was to be 'higher technical education' which '*would prepare the technical managers for mechanical and electrical undertakings and could be used for the purpose of training teachers.*'[27]

Four main lines of argument are presented in the Report in support of the provision of 'continuation education'. Firstly, it is reported from within the technical instruction system that difficulties were experienced with '*students whose primary education was defective... many candidates for the technical school were drawn from the ranks of the irregular attenders....*'[28]. The passing of a School Attendance Act, 1926 which made attendance at school compulsory up to the age of fourteen was identified as making a significant contribution to addressing this issue. But the need for a form of 'pre-employment education of a semi-vocational character' was identified for the age of 14-16. Secondly, there were firm and generally held views about the appropriate starting age for technical education:

> *Witnesses before the Commission were almost unanimous in the view that formal technical or agricultural education should not begin before the age of 16, and should not be based on primary education solely, no matter how efficient the system of primary education might be.*[29]

Thirdly, there was the case for a pre-vocational curriculum:

> *We understand that it is the policy of most progressive countries to provide a sufficient basis for technical or agricultural education by the establishment of a connecting link for the critical period between 14 and 16. Primary school pupils at 14 are not mature enough to appreciate the realities of employment and the special forms of instruction that relate thereto; they require to be brought through an intermediate stage where they can obtain an education with sufficient practical bias to help to correct the dislike for industrial work, which is a characteristic common to the youth of today leaving the primary and indeed the secondary schools. For this intermediate stage the State should provide facilities for the establishment of schools and classes of a character suited to both rural and urban requirements.*[30]

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26 ibid, p20. In his address to congress Fletcher makes the suggestion that technical education would be more appropriately referred to as 'vocational education', i.e., *training young men and women for their work in life' p23.* This is the earliest reference to the new nomenclature to be used in the 1930 act that has come to attention.

27 Report of the Commission. (1927) pp41-53, re continuation education; pp54-105 re technical education and pp106-108 re higher technical education.

28 ibid. p36. This was the idea echoed by the Minister in his 1926 address in Killarney.

29 ibid, p42.

30 ibid.

Finally, there was the argument around juvenile employment. So impressed was the Commission with the observations of the Advisory Committees for Juvenile Employment for Dublin, Cork and Limerick that an extended extract of their submission was incorporated into the Report.[31] Their central observation was that excess youth labour needed to be managed.

> *Every year a considerable number of children for whom there is no work available leave our primary schools at the age of 14 and in the period of idleness which follows lose the good habits and much of the knowledge acquired at school. The evil effects of unemployment on boys and girls at an impressionable age and newly released from restraining influences need not be stressed. They affect the individual development of the child and have ultimately an adverse effect on the industrial development of the country. Some form of continued control over these children would appear to be necessary and the Committee consider that some scheme be devised whereby only those children for whom employment is available should be free to leave school under the age of sixteen years.*[32]

The Advisory Committee went on to recommend that those who have achieved a certain standard of proficiency should be transferred to a more advanced school where their education will be continued on different lines:

> *In this school provision should be made for handicraft and domestic economy training. Simple lectures on citizenship and economics should be included in the curriculum. Drill instructions should be given and in suburban schools lessons in gardening.* [33]

The analysis of the proposal for continuation education contains one paragraph on the matter of existing secondary schools.[34] The Report acknowledges that a consideration of continuation education in any locality would be incomplete without examination of the position of existing secondary schools. It was noted that in a large number of secondary schools the majority of pupils do not remain in attendance beyond the Intermediate Certificate age - usually 16.

However,

> *They (*the secondary schools) *have maintained a tradition of preparing young people for university and professional life and for appointments to the civil service. Many witnesses commented on the lack of relation of the work of the secondary school to the ordinary requirements of the locality which it serves and expressed the view that the secondary school would fulfil frequently a more useful purpose if it were of junior technical or junior agricultural type.*[35]

While there is a recommendation that the curriculum of the secondary school should be 'designed to meet the needs of the majority' and that Science, Drawing, Manual Instruction or Domestic Economy should be obligatory subjects, the central recommendation was that the new form of provision, the continuation school and the continuation class, would be established.

Similarly, there were recommendations for the reform of the primary school curriculum to include Drawing, which had been dropped in 1922, Domestic Science and Manual Instruction (and Rural

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31 ibid, p52-3.
32 ibid.
33 ibid.
34 ibid, p49-50.
35 ibid.

Science in rural areas). An examination for all sixth standard pupils was also recommended.[36] A circular issued by the Department of Education in 1922 was quoted with approval. '*Making the children in rural areas favourably disposed towards agriculture, the natural vocation of a large proportion of many of them...* ' and '*...on which for generations to come, the economic life of the nation will be based....* ' was to be work of the rural primary school.[37] In the case of schools in cities and large towns, the pupil's attention should be directed towards the industries that exist: '*...they should be stimulated ... to take a lively interest in the industrial life around them, and to recognise that this is the life to the building of which the majority of them will naturally be called'.*[38]

In this general view, education services were merely recognising and responding to a process of labour market differentiation established in the natural order of things. The acknowledged function was to increase productive capacity, the allocating function was being carried out by prior 'natural' processes.[39]. The major proposition presented by the Commission was that '*...a proper system of continuation education is of vital importance to the social and economic welfare of the people and its organisation must be undertaken without delay'.*[40] A number of caveats were entered. It was 'realised' that some time must elapse before schemes of continuation schools and classes could be general in the Saorstat. Compulsory attendance would only be required for unemployed young people between the age of 14 and 16; young people engaged on farm work, whether employees or not, should not be subject to compulsory attendance. Those in employment should be obliged to attend part-time a minimum of 180 hours in each year.

The concept of continuation education had been part of Irish education official discourse since it appeared in the 1919 Education (Ireland) Bill Section 14(1) of that Bill empowered local education committees, (one for each county and major city) '*to assist in the establishment and maintenance of evening continuation schools'.*[41]

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36 ibid, p36, 37. This proposal was endorsed by a report on school inspection in 1927 and a 'The Primary School Certificate was introduced as an optional examination was introduced in 1929. However, only about twenty-five percent of pupils ever sat the examination until it became compulsory in 1943. It was abolished again in 1967. See Coolahan (1981), opcit. p43.
The Report of the commission on Technical Instruction was at pains to point out that in their view '*this examination should not be competitive and should not be designed to bring out candidates of exceptional merit only. The tests should be of such a character as can be accomplished readily by a pupil of average ability who has accomplished the sixth standard course'.*

37 ibid, pp37-8

38 ibid, p38. The references to suggest that some would have a 'natural vocation' to work as an agricultural labourer or that others would be 'naturally be called' to existing jobs in industry. For further discussion of this view of the natural order see Chapter 9.

39 An awareness of the potential of intervention in occupational destination is evident in the reservation statement of Mr. Good, T.D., included in the Commission Report. '*Boys and girls of poor parents, without influence or friends to help them, are in consequence tempted to a too easy acceptance of any employment that offers, quite irrespective of their education and aptitudes'.* An early recognition of the role of 'social capital'.

40 ibid, p51.

41 For a discussion of the fate of the 1919 Bill see Coolahan, J. (1979), 'The Education Bill of 1919 - Problems of Educational Reform', in Proceedings of Educational Studies Association Congress, Limerick, 1979 pp11-31 and Hyland, A. (1991) 'Education Bills, 1919-1992 in Irish Education DecisionMaker, No. 3, Summer 1991, p.2-6. The first Irish reference to continuation education as a term that I have become aware of is in the debates of the 1907 ITIA Congress as reported in Dowling, 1909, opcit.

Continuation Education

Continuation education had been used in Westminster legislation for England and Wales in the 1918 (Fisher) Education Act, enacted after the report of the Departmental Committee on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment, (The Lewis Report) in 1917. This report presented a conception of the juvenile as '...primarily the workman and the citizen in training', recommended a school leaving age of 14 and compulsory attendance at 'day continuation classes'.[42] The introduction of Continuation education sparked a vigorous debate in England with the Committee of the Federation of British Industries arguing against the raising of the school leaving age and against compulsory part-time continuation education because of the labour cost implications and advocating selection after compulsory schooling for 'the more promising child' who would be provided with a general academic secondary education. In selecting children for higher education the Federation warned against general access to higher education lest there would be created a large class of persons unsuitable for the employments they would eventually enter. This provoked a strong counter from R.H. Tawney and others who saw in the proposal an assumed 'dichotomy between the well-to-do and the poor, between the labouring classes and their superiors and a different kind of education for each group'.[43]

The proposals for an Irish continuation education system, in contrast, generated no vigorous opposition. The idea, in general terms, had survived the transition to the new state. In November 1925, the Minister for Education, Eoin MacNeill, outlined his educational policy to the Dail. The Minister announced his intention to introduce a Leaving Certificate examination at the end of primary school stage. This examination would test the fitness of all pupils for entry into the post-primary stage.

In the post-primary stage he contemplated three branches:

- **Part-time continuation education**
  up to sixteen or eighteen for those who would be unable to avail of whole-time education after primary
- **Full time day-technical education**
  of a vocational or semi-vocational nature for those who would not have to take up employment immediately after the primary stage
- **Full-time day general intermediate education**
  to be given in the secondary schools or the higher primary schools.[44]

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42 See Coffey (1992) pp110-112. The Day continuation schools where they did get off the ground did not survive the early 1920's. When, in 1929, the Organiser of Continuation Education for the London County Council was invited to read a paper on continuation schools to the Irish Technical Instruction Congress, they had been discontinued. He was however, able to cite provision for continuation education in the US public school systems. See Ingram, B. (1929) 'Continuation Schools': A Paper Read at the Irish Technical Instruction Congress, Sligo, June 11-13,1929.

43 See Coffey, (1992) p110-112.

44 Dail Debates: for 11/11/1925, Col. 191-193.

In the course of the internal civil service deliberations and the public Dail discussions on the terms of the Bill drafted to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission Report, only minor points of dissent were registered and in the economic domain, there was no challenge to the basic role of continuation and technical education as provided for in the Bill.[45] In terms of conceptual content, apprenticeship was separated out from other forms of technical education to become the subject of a separate piece of legislation introduced by the Department of Industry and Commerce, with whom the overall responsibility for apprenticeships would henceforth reside. This development can be seen as the first introduction of a limitation or division to the technical education remit of the newly formed Department of Education.[46] Its significance as a division of responsibility lay dormant for thirty years, when a changed set of economic policies were being applied through a new Apprenticeship Act in 1959, and through the establishment of a Department of Labour in 1966 and a national industrial training agency in 1967. More revealing of immediate concerns was the apprehension expressed by the Industry and Commerce department lest compulsory attendance would have an effect on the availability of labour. The Secretary, Gordon Campbell, opined that:

> *Presumably the capacity to benefit from, and availability for Vocational Education will vary according to the individual child rather than the area of its residence and if attendance must be made compulsory for all children in an area either many will have to attend though no benefit is anticipated from their attendance and employment may be affected by their non-availability....*[47]

This concern about the supply of youth labour had been anticipated by Minister O'Sullivan in his 1926 Congress address where he expected there would be opposition from '*...the small farmers in some counties who may find it a strain on their resources to send their children regularly to school even up to the age of fourteen*'.[48] This concern was expressed also in the course of the Dail debates on the Vocational Education Bill. The Bill gave the Minister power to make attendance compulsory at continuation classes for young people up to the age of fifteen. This was to be done by the designation of districts under the terms of Part V of the Bill. A duty would be imposed on employers in districts designated under Part V of the Act to afford '*...such young person time and liberty to attend such course of instruction without any deduction from wages or any addition to the hours of employment or reckoning such time as lost*'. Employers who failed to provide the necessary information on young people eligible under the provision would be liable for fine '*...not exceeding twenty shillings*'.[49] To meet the concerns of potential employers the compulsory courses were to be confined to one hundred

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45 The documentation available on the internal civil service deliberations is contained in the National Archive files of the Dept. Of Finance, S84/13/29. The committee stage on the vocational education Bill, 1930 was taken on 10th May 1930, see Dail Debates for that date, cols.227-290.

46 See National Archives, DF/S84/13/29. The draft heads for a 'Bill entitled an Act to amend the law relating to Technical Education, to establish Local Committees for Vocational Education, to regulate attendance and Employment of Young Persons and for Purposes in connection therewith.' was circulated to Departments on 10th May, 1929. On July 9th, 1929, the secretary of the Dept. Of Industry and Commerce was forwarding a set of draft heads for an Apprenticeship Bill, indicating that the Education Bill could now be amended to remove those sections which located the responsibility for apprentice committees in Education, and that there would be no objection to the two Bills being presented together. (Letter No.6324-29). This was subsequently agreed by Education. No documentation on the exchanges surrounding the decision has been brought to light to date.

47 Nat. Archive, DF S84/13/29, Letter 6324-29. Campbell also expressed concern lest children who would benefit would have no school.

48 Irish Technical Instruction Association Twenty-Second Congress, Killarney, 1926, p19.

49 Vocational Education Act, 1930, Part V, Sections 67 (2) & 69 (1).

and eighty hours of instruction per year and *'...in every case, shall be distributed, as regards times and seasons, in such manner as may best suit the circumstances of the district...'.*[50] In the course of the Dail debates on the Bill, Labour deputies were unsuccessfully proposing an increased fine on un-cooperative employers and the Fianna Fail Party representatives sought and received an amendment to ensure that farming interests were to be consulted on the timing of compulsory courses in rural areas.[51]

The archive material from the Department of Finance reveals a focus on the economics of inputs with little direct attention to the economic impact of the proposed system's output. One of the few expressions of concern about output was the rather patronising one contained in a memo from the Finance to the Education department on 29/8/1928 and repeated in another memo on 9/4/1930: [52]

> *In the view of the Minister for Finance it should be also a definite requirement of the scheme for continuation education wherever adopted that the instruction provided be of a real practical value and for the purpose of ensuring this object, that any scheme to be approved will have to contain practical hand training for both sexes.*

A not unexpected priority in that quarter was to minimise the level of state expenditure which would be incurred. The files show that it was agreed between the Departments of Education and Finance that a twenty-year period would be allowed for in the establishment of the proposed scheme of continuation education.[53] Finance put forward the proposal that any scheme of continuation education must contain practical hand training for both sexes, arguing that *'the difficulties of providing a sufficient number of trained instructors will inevitably slow down development'.*[54] Finance had argued that the state had been providing relatively well for education in comparative terms and produced a set of tables showing the Saorstat to be spending 23% of state expenditure on supply services on education. This compared with 11.8% in Great Britain, 19.4% in Denmark, 19.2% in Sweden and 6.2% in France. Even in amount per head of population, the Saorstat was investing more than others.[55]

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50 ibid. Section 61(3). The compulsory attendance could be fulfilled in primary secondary or in the new continuation schools. - Section 63.

51 Ibid. Section 61(3) provides for consultation with the Committees of Agriculture. See Dail Debates 29th May, Col 267-8 where the amendment is moved by Deputy Heffernan and accepted by the Minister.

52 Nat. Arch. DF. S84/13/29. This was penned by Walter Doolin, BA, Principal Officer in the Dept. of Finance, who was a member of the Commission. In a 'Reservation Statement' in the Commission Report, Doolin had stated: *'I am not satisfied that all the money's spent by the Technical Instruction branch of the Dept. of Education and by the local committees of Technical Instruction are being spent on schemes that are really profitable for the education of the nation...p155'.*

53 ibid. See also Dail Debates 29th May 1930; moving the Vocational Education Bill, 1930 - Money Resolution, the Minister for Education, Prof. O'Sullivan explained *'.... when the scheme was in full working order it would add a sum of between £150,000 and £160,000 to the amount of money paid out by the Oireachtas (Parliament) or an advance of from £8,000 to £10,000, spread over a period of from fifteen to twenty years'.*

54 From 'Conference held in the Minister's Room to Discuss the Heads of the Proposed Vocational Education Bill, 1929,' on 14/8/1929. Nat. Arch. DF. S84/13/29.

55 ibid. Ireland claimed to be spending £1.64 per head, compared with £1.7 in Great Britain, £1.59 in Northern Ireland, £1.25 in Denmark, £1.18 in Sweden, £0.5 in France and £0.39 in Canada. The Finance memo neatly states that *'By reason of relations with the Imperial Exchequer, the figure(s) for supply services in Northern Ireland are not available'.* It has not been possible to test the credibility of this assertion by reference to independent data.

System Development & the Economy - Interview Data

The conception of the 'rural vocational school' dominated the slow development of the VEC system in the first thirty years of its existence. The rise of the Continuation courses and the relative sluggishness of the technical courses in the towns and cities evident in the data in Chapter 7 reflected the priorities of the system in operation.

Asked to identify the major contribution of the VEC system up to the 1960's,

> **McDwyer observed:**
>
> *...the very big one there was the extension of* ***the development of the rural vocational school,*** *in getting second level education with a strong practical bias and with a very very definite theme of education for the land and for the home, into this country for the very first time. Never before that was secondary education or second-level education of any kind open to the ordinary, average rural family, particularly the farmer, the farming family, the small farming family obviously the labourers family, except for the occasional very clever student, for whom enormous sacrifices were made, enormous sacrifices were made at the expense of the rest of the family, of course. The rural vocational school opened the door to post-primary second-level education and the period 1930-1950 was a period of intensive building of small rural vocational schools. All with domestic science for girls, rural science and woodwork for boys. Very much on the practical side and all related to the home, to the family, to the farm. Now they found of course jobs; six children, one ran the 25-30 acre farm, five had to go and the schools served that purpose as well as it could do. But nonetheless the dominant theme was education for the land and for the home. So that for these schools the purpose was quite thoroughly defined and meant that these schools would feed the little rural communities in which they were built (and) not bleed them. Because, lets face it, up to that time, the practical effect of second level school was indeed to bleed the rural community of the children with brains, who went on to become teachers, civil servants, priests, doctors, off the land.*
>
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *Were there other characteristics of that period - 1930-1960?*
>
> ***McDwyer***
>
> *Well, you must remember of course that the war tremendously distorted everything, made life very difficult in very many ways and that it extended from 1940 to 1950, 10 years, for all practical purposes and life was very difficult for everybody. Nonetheless building of these little rural vocational schools went ahead very soundly and also the night class network was extensively used up. And the farmers discussion groups, which subsequently became farmers clubs subsequently become Macra na Tuaithe.'*

The key theme here is the development of the productivity of the farming community; - '...the home, the family and the farm...' There is a clear delineation of the respective roles of boys and girls and the retention of the rural youth was a conscious objective. This same perspective comes across from McCabe, who started his career as a Rural Science teacher in Co. Sligo in the 1950's.

> *'The main emphasis was to upgrade farming and to upgrade home living. What surprises me now that I go back to think of this, I have to think of the girls separately from the boys. Because the Home Economics teacher was working in parallel with the Rural Science teacher in terms of keeping in touch with the home. I concentrate on my own particular interest because it meant that I visited homes in the context of the home gardens fairly frequently - a couple of times a year and that is a lot of homes. You got to know the parents, you got to know the countryside and you got to challenge the kid who was doing a garden near his home keeping it in reasonable trim... it gave an opportunity to set standards in a subtle way, in terms of speaking to parents etc..... the role of the*

garden was exemplary... a microcosm of the farm. What the young guy could do in his spare time in the garden, he could in his family, in what his father might be doing on the land.

This focus on the rural, however, was not exclusive. Hyland, whose father was a Commerce teacher in a town vocational school recalled:

....certain things about my father's situation and his role in the town, basically, in society, if you like, and that was that he had put through his hands people who had got very - which was seen as - very good jobs in the town. In other words, if a merchant in the town, a timber merchant or whatever, wanted a book-keeper they would invariably come to my father to recommend an entry-level book-keeper and he would recommend, you know, the best of the people he had, to whom he had been teaching book-keeping. And there were a whole clatter of people around the town over the years who had gone in on that basis and had moved up in these businesses and were sometimes the senior financial person in those firms, some of which were substantial, comparatively substantial. So he would have been very proud of these people and they and the families there would have seen that as a very important avenue for people, who were, you know, to move into what were seen as very good jobs in the town. So that would have been quite an important role, that would have given prestige, given satisfaction personally and given prestige...

This theme of linkage with the local economy is also reflected in the comments of O'Rourke, a former VEC member and Minister for Education, 1987-1993, whose father ran a clothing industry in the midland town of Athlone:

*Brendan O'Brien (*The vocational school Principal in Athlone) *used to go to my father and they would place the boys and girls into General Textiles where there were a thousand in employment. Now I am talking about the 40's and the 50's. And Brendan O'Brien would come; there was a direct placement agency between Brendan O'Brien and my father.*

According to Conway, a member of Meath VEC since the 1960's, whose mother had been a member for the first three decades of the life of VEC's,

There was a great meeting of minds and that between the Principal and the industrialists within the Town .... Well it was mainly that we set up classes and training geared towards the main industries within the area. Now one little school we have in Meath, Longwood, down at the Southeastern corner of the County. That school was built mainly to service the ESB and Bord na Mona.....'(Semi-state run utility companies).

In the exchange which follows, Blaney, who attended VEC evening classes in the 1930's and later was a member and Chairman of Donegal VEC, and a Cabinet minister during the 1960's, drew attention to a further dimension of the economic contribution of the early decades of the VEC system:

O'Reilly
Would you have seen any impact in terms of employment, and people having been at VEC courses, becoming employers, in local small industries or enterprises?
Blaney
I would say that the activity, the housing activity and building activity and that of the out-houses as well, God knows the times I'm thinking about it was houses rather than out-houses that would have been the demand at the time, but even as the years rolled on and into construction in the farm and the farm yard and the farm houses and farm buildings, again, there would have been a development of and a lot of our small contractors who would not unfortunately now be listed, they

wouldn't have the whatever you call it, that they have to have. Alot of those would have been, in fact all of those would have products of the classes given by the VEC.

These observations taken together indicate a range of generalised economic functions of the VEC schools in the new state. 'When, however, it was put to McDwyer that '*The 40's and 50's were bleak years in emigration from the areas being served by the rural vocational schools, and it wasn't stemmed really was it?* he answered firmly, *'No, most certainly not, no.'* For Waldron, starting his teaching career in Belmullet, in Mayo, in the late 1940's, emigration was central experience for the youth labour market:

All the youngsters would be going off to England now to sow potatoes and subsequently to pick them. The system was that they were what was referred to locally as 'totie hooker', 'potato gangers'. These people took out contracts in England and Scotland, a lot of it in Scotland. They would supply the labour; they would be responsible for the young people and they would recruit them and find lodgings for them, lodgings were stables and barns and places like hay sheds, they were really sleeping on a blanket over hay. And they always had a woman, one woman, then employed, one woman to do the cooking for them. And they moved from area to area, from barn to barn. But from about Christmas on, they spent their time recruiting in Belmullet, recruiting these students and it was done mainly in pubs and places like that on market days. They would buy drinks for the fathers and for their families, then they would visit other families you know. But the children were contracted to them and they contracted with them.

Other interviewees, too, found it difficult to attribute to the Vocational school courses, any particular contribution to the stemming of emigration. McDwyer, above in his comments on schools that would 'feed the little rural communities', comes close to articulating the views of the 'Commission on Emigration etc., cited in Chapter 7(ii), on the potential of the vocational school education, with its practical orientation to the local economy:

Some witnesses were very definite that technical and vocational education, by developing the aptitudes of young people and providing them with skilled training, enabled them to take better advantage of employment opportunities, and was therefore a deterrent to emigration. While this may be true, it is no less desirable that the educational standard of those who emigrate should be raised so that they are not confined to the more arduous and menial forms of employment through lack of adequate education.[56]

The issue was addressed directly in the interview with Blaney as follows:

O'Reilly
Was the flow of emigrants from Donegal in any way stemmed or did vocational education provision in any way act as a break on that?
Blaney
No, I wouldn't feel competent to say either yes or no. But my own sort of gut feeling would be that rather than having stemmed it or helped to stem it, it brought about perhaps a situation when we had more migrants than we had emigrants, based on the fact that they had homes to come back to, that they had improved their homes or built their homes as most of them did, that they had a family of families housed in those homes and whatever number went away didn't go away for keeps, they went away and came back. Parts of the year they were at home and part of the year they were away, so they were truly migrants. And I think again that if there had been no roof over the heads

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56 In an addendum to the commission's report Rev. Thomas Counihan, S.J. posed three questions about the vocational schools and their Continuation courses: i) *'Was there a real need to build schools to house under the same roof both boys and girls?' ii) Was it not strange that the nuns and the Christian Brothers who had been providing such courses in some cases were not invited to develop this work?;* iii) *'Why were not efforts made to enlarge and equip as many National Schools as possible around the country in order to cater for the new courses?'.* ibid, p193.

at home, there would have been no returning and in that way, you have long and direct manner, yes they would have stemmed real emigration, would have stemmed the numbers that were emigrants as distinct from migrants.

Certainly, the VEC system teachers were used precisely for this purpose as is evident in the scheme reported in the 1948/49 report of the Department of Education in which a 'Rural Building Programme' under which VEC employed Construction teachers to assist farmers to plan and execute the construction of home and farm buildings.[57] But the overall doubt about the economic contribution of the VEC system in the early decades, suggested in the Commission extract above also surfaced in the interview with Bishop McKiernan:

O'Reilly
Was there a link between the local economy and the vocational school that was say stronger than say links between other schools and the local economy - is that a reasonable assessment or is that wide at the mark?
Bishop McKiernan
I don't think there would have been any significant links in the area that I know,- Cavan/Leitrim-between the vocational school apart from what I have mentioned in providing skills for people. Maybe there were but I can't recall or remember. Maybe you have something in particular.
O'Reilly
Well I'm just wondering as a secondary school now in the '50s would it anticipate that its students on graduation would stay in the local economy to the same extent that the vocational school graduates would have done?
Bishop McKiernan
I think a strong element in the secondary school mentality of the '50s, '40's and 50s and into the '60s was that number one, those of them who were financially able - that they would get matriculation and go onto University and get their degrees. Those of them who wouldn't have the financial resources to do that would be expecting a job in the white collar jobs - banks, civil service that kind of thing and not the mentality of that time was any of them that had education was to get away from the land, it would be the very odd one who would get his Leaving Cert. and go back on his fathers farm.
O'Reilly
Did the vocational school play any role in telling people to go back to the land?
Bishop McKiernan
Ah, the only significant contribution that they would have there would have been the agricultural science, rural science that was taught in school and I'm not aware that that had any significant effect in regard to farming or any of these things. Now that is within my own experience.

Generalised Human Capital Development & Social Improvement

In economic terms, it is difficult to argue for a significant and precise impact of the VEC continuation courses in Irish life. No specific employments were reserved or attainable only through the continuation courses. The real and the opportunity costs of a practical form of secondary education were reduced which made it accessible, to many. When McDwyer was asked to identify the achievements of the early decades his reply was in terms of its general impact on human and social improvement:

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57 See Report of Dept. of Education 1948-49, p29.

O'Reilly
What did it achieve?
McDwyer
Well I suppose one would have to say improved rural living and improved social conditions in the countryside.

Waldron, speaking of the contribution of domestic science teachers makes a similar observation:

> *The contribution made by domestic science teachers in those years has never been properly valued. They raised the standard of cooking, of hygiene, of needlework, of sewing, of knitting, all over this country. It was amazing what they did.... If you think back to the food, bacon and cabbage, that was it, in a country house, that was general. Bread and butter and an egg would be the tea and nothing else. ...The standard of hygiene was quite low. Remember this: in the vocational schools at that time the timetable for the week would have 10-12 hours, depending on the school, of domestic science, 10-12 hours of woodwork and there was great emphasis on the practical. The domestic science exams were practical exams, both cooking and sewing.*

This generalist approach to the impact of the service is detectable also in the summation offered by **Lenihan**, Committee member in the 1950's and minister in the 1960's.

> *... they (the VECs) broadened out the whole system of post-primary education. Until VECs were established and the vocational schools were set up, until that happening, there was a very limited form of post-primary education that was largely tilted in the direction of producing priests and civil servants and professional people and if it didn't produce them well then it would produce nobody. So that there was a big vacuum in 1930 for a form of education that went outside a limited academic stream, that only lead in a certain direction. The need was for a form of education that was much broader. Where you had practical classes like woodwork, classes like engineering, classes in electrical engineering and so on, so that you had a broader stream of practical subjects and streams related to agriculture, fishing, agricultural practice, rural development courses and so on. A whole range of practical and civic subjects that were not included in the old secondary school system and post 1930 were not included in the secondary school system, were included in the vocational education system and for that reason they formed the first broadening of the basis of Irish education.*

Lenihan, however, articulated also a strong sense of the limitations of the economic impact of the VEC in their earlier decades when contrasting their early contribution with the later decades:

Lenihan

> *Up to the ''Investment in Education''(1965) proposals and the implementation of them in the way of developing the system of technological education, the Vocational Education Committees that have existed since 1930, while performing a very useful function, were too narrowly based. They weren't fully accepted within the post-primary system compared to secondary education. They themselves had become loaded with academic subjects and in many cases duplicating the secondary schools that were already there. So that there was a need for (a) bringing second level education together in each area, that's the existing vocational and secondary facilities, recognising that they were part of second level education and in some way should be integrated while given the freedom to go separate as streams within that framework. But that above all there was a future in going into the system so that people could emerge that time with say an Intermediate or Leaving Certificate from the vocational schools (as they were called then) and move on into the regional colleges and move on to the subsequent technical oriented third level institutions that emerged in Limerick and Ballymun. The development flowing from the Lynch Report gave some focus to VEC education.*

The twin movements of the second period of VEC activity are succinctly captured by Lenihan's comments above. The VEC second-level provision of Continuation courses was to be integrated into the second level general courses of the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate programmes for secondary schools, and, a new technical and technological provision would be grown on the elements that existed within the VEC system. The major dilemma for the VEC system is also echoed in Lenihan's observations where he refers to VEC provision being 'integrated while given the freedom to go separate within that framework'.

Phase 2

Economic Function of Education Comes Centre Stage

In March 1958, the Minister for Education, John (Jack) Lynch, was speaking of a *'sound' system of education*, of '...the position of science in our schools' as *'by no means unsatisfactory'* and asserting that

> *... educationalists should never overlook the fact that the importance assumed by a particular subject or group of subjects, because of some vital need, discovery or development in industrial commercial or social spheres, may give to that subject in the school curriculum an unbalanced emphasis to the detriment of the old and well-established beliefs and traditions of education.*

The Minister went on to

> *... pray that in producing young men better versed in the secrets of science, our secondary schools will continue to give their minds a humanistic leavening so that they may better understand the purpose of their scientific study and harness the forces over which they are given control to serve men's cultural and social welfare here and in his final destiny hereafter.* [58]

He showed little enthusiasm for state grants for secondary school building, suggesting such a proposal would force the state to intervene and *'problems might arise... '* He argued that *'... the establishment and growth of the vocational schools is in no way a threat to the growth and expansion of secondary schools... '* and cited the comparative growth in schools and enrolments. *'The two systems are not antagonistic - rather are they complementary, making our education system whole, enlarging its contents and strengthening its character.* [59] In November of the same year, he was saying: *' Even if the state's selfish interest must be kept in mind, we need humanists as well as, if not more than, technicians and other specialists'.*[60]

In the spring of the following year, the same Minister was putting the emphasis, not on the traditional and on continuity, but on the need for change and for technicians. Broader economic developments were referenced in his speech to vocational teachers: the recently published Programme for

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58 Address to the Congress of the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland, at Bray, on Wed. 9 April 1958. As in National Archives: GIS 1/234 Lynch Speeches. See also Irish Times, 10/4/1958.

59 ibid.

60 Irish Press, 14/11/1958.

Economic Development, the Apprenticeship Bill before the Dail; '*Whether the European Common Market will be extended in some form to include all OEEC countries... and whether the Free Trade area (with Britain) will become a reality.*[61] There was a need for technicians and for modern language skills and '. *the facilities offered by some of our vocational education schemes, particularly in the more populous areas, will be recognised and availed of ... to acquire that knowledge.*'

In terms of economic policy, a long transition from 'economic isolationism' based on an agricultural economy, to 'free trade' coupled with industrial development had begun. This process was marked by the establishment in 1949 of an Industrial Development Authority, by the introduction of Export Profits Tax relief in 1956, and came to fruition in the Programmes for Economic Development.

The change in Irish economic policy has been variously attributed to the publication of policy documents in 1958 and 1959 by the young secretary to the Department of Finance, T.K. Whitaker, [*'Economic Development (1958)' and Programme for Economic Expansion (1959)*], or by the replacement of deValera as Taoiseach in June 1959.[62] Among the possible contributions to the potential for change at that period, O'Grada (1997: 29) instances the cumulative effect on long term social capital investment. In his 1958 document, Whitaker commented positively on the traditional, first phase, role of VEC institutions:

> *The vocational organisation is more flexible than the primary and secondary systems and those concerned with it are imbued with an enthusiasm which, in large areas of rural Ireland where the system is still a novelty, gives something of a missionary character to the work involved. These schools, furthermore, can fulfil a most important function in becoming the social centres of rural areas.*[63]

A sense of the excitement of the period and of the commitment of those involved is also evident in the comments of Dr. Finbar O'Callaghan, who joined the Inspectorate of the Technical Instruction Branch in the Dept. of Education in the mid 1950's:

> ***O'Callaghan***
>
> *Well, that period was a very interesting one, full of innovativeness and creativity in the VEC system. It was really good, you know. And to my understanding of the thing really was that there was a great spirit of co-operation and concern going on there between the TIB and the CEOs and the members of the committees and a very very hard look at what they might be able to do to gear up the system to whatever kind of work was available'*

The Vocational Teachers Association, meeting in Killarney in May, 1959, heard their President, Liam McGrenera of Clonmel link the Programme for Economic Expansion, with the amendments to the Apprenticeship Act then in the Dail. McDwyer, CEO for Kerry at the same event, was speaking of

> *the world was in the midst of a technological revolution and was moving towards automation."* There would; he said, "*be no great requirement for unskilled labour, for work*

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61 Address of the Minister to 'Cumann na Muinteoiri Gairm-Oideachais, Killarney, 1958, in National Archives, GIS 1/234. See also Irish Press, 2/4/1959.

62 See F.S. L. Lyons, (1973), Ireland Since the Famine, London:Fontana, p628.

63 Economic Development', Dublin:Stationery Office, 1958, p102.

of that type would be done by machines and there would be a vast army of technicians and scientists. Ireland must prepare for its place in that New World. They must face up to the cost of providing facilities for higher technological training. Ever concerned for the prospects of rural Ireland, he stressed, "It would not" he said, "be right to confine opportunities for such specialised training to city youth alone.[64].

The occasion was one in which the Minister listed the contribution of VEC's to economic development as *"hotel training courses, courses for marine fishery and for Irish Shipping, assistance in forestry training, in apprentice training for Bord na Mona (The National Peat (fuel) Board) and possibly most fundamental of all, in the growth of Macra na Tuaithe in our rural schools ... and the success of building instructors in rural areas"* - the familiar patterns of VEC activity to date. But in the next paragraph, he introduced the language of a new direction, speaking of *"one field of activity, which is of growing importance in every county and to which all in vocational education might give close attention. I refer to the technician, a man whose function lies somewhere between the skilled craftsman and the technologist or university graduate."*[65]

Wholetime technical education in VEC institutions had doubled in the period from 1952 (when date on such was first returned) to 1959[66], increasing from 526 to 954 students. Some months later, in October 1959, Lynch, now Minister for Industry and Commerce in the Lemass led government. was present when the new Minister for Education, Dr Patrick Hillery and CEO for Dublin City VEC announced that the Department of Education were now prepared to provide a *"National Diploma or a Technical College Diploma"* to be taken by students entering professional courses in technical colleges which would have the status of a University degree and be acceptable as such by the professional bodies.[67]

The exchanges on that spring night 1959 in Killarney, were also significant for two additional themes which were articulated forcibly and in language that would become central to educational rhetoric over the next thirty years. McGrenera, the vocational teachers' president, called for *"equal opportunity of access to higher education for all children"*, that *"the routes must be made available, whether through the secondary school to the University, or technical schools to technological colleges"*[68]. Equality of Educational opportunity would continue as a major policy in Irish Education. The concept of a *"third level technological sector"* was being developed from within the VEC system. McGrenera had gone on to observe that *"the level of demand for facilities and opportunities for training could not be met, unless the basic needs of a general education were first provided."* He then suggested that *"this need can be satisfied by ending primary education as such at 13 years of age, and that up to 15 years of age the course should be of a general nature which would include science, mathematics, manual training or domestic economy, as the case might be"*[69].

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64 Reported in Irish Independent, 2/4/1959.
65 Killarney Address, 1/4/1958. p5 also Irish Press, 2/4/1959.
66 See Appendix 1 to Ch. 9 for data 1950 - 59.
67 Reported in the Irish Independent, 8/10/1959 also Irish Times, same date.
68 As reported in Irish Press, 21/4/1959.
69 ibid.

The Killarney VTA conference in 1959 contained in germ form the key ideas which would dominate educational development for the next thirty years. In March, 1962 Minister Hillery was explaining to the Dublin Institute of Catholic Sociology the idea that

> *...the better educated a people are, the more enlightened they will be and so the more ready will they be to work harder with the purpose of providing themselves with still more educational facilities... (and) the greater the skill the greater will be the earning power.*

This is what is called 'Investment in Education....', he informed his audience in the first Ministerial outing in Irish educational discourse of this seminal term[70]. In June of that year, the Minister established a Departmental Committee under a senior inspector, Dr Duggan, and with Dr. O'Callaghan an inspector in the Technical Instruction Branch, as Secretary, "*to consider the present position of post-primary education and to make recommendations*"[71]. In October, he addressed the first meeting of the steering group established to prepare the country study for the recently agreed OECD report on Education in Ireland. The study to be carried out already had the title *"Investment in Education."* Referring to a growing international understanding of the relationship between economies and education in which Ireland shared, the Minister acknowledged that "*...there has been inadequate emphasis in the past (on) the role of education in economic development .... It was therefore with alacrity that the Government responded to a suggestion from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development that a survey should be made in Ireland of long-term educational need.*"[72]

The study was intended to

> *assess the educational needs of our expanding economy as well as the economic implications of ever increasing demand for education. Education was now accepted as an investment in national resources .... A country that allows its 'human capital' to lie fallow will .... be left behind culturally as well economically. This is particularly true in such a country as Ireland, which in many respects is probably more fertile in human than in natural resources.*[73].

This recognition of the economic dimension to education, and the adoption of the language of 'Human Capital' development, was to mark a critical turning. The alternative view, that the principal objective of education was religious, moral and cultural development received its last major official expression in the 1962 report of the Council of Education on *"The Curriculum of the Secondary School"*, which stated categorically that *"the aim ... is cultural rather than practical"*[74] The report of the *"Investment*

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70 A talk by Dr PJ. Hillary, T.D. Minister for Education to Dublin Institute of Catholic Sociology, Friday 9th March 1962 "Irish Education for the New Europe." A topic chosen no doubt in the light of government enthusiasm for its application for membership of the EEC submitted in July 1961. See Horgan, J. (1997) Sean Lemass the Enigmatic Patriot, Dublin:Gill & Macmillan, p 220.

71 The terms of reference for the "Coiste Scrudaithe Oideachais Iarbunscoile" as contained in the draft report. I am grateful to Prof. A. Hyland, National University of Ireland, Cork for a copy of this report. See also Elliott-Boniel, I (1996), The role of the Duggan Report, (1962) in the Reform of the Irish Educational System; Administration, Vol. 44, No. 3, p42-60 for a discussion of the work of this committee. O'Callaghan, the secretary of this group was interviewed by the author of this study.

72 Speech delivered on 31/10/1962, at the first meeting of the steering Committee for the "Study under the Aegis of OECD, Investment in Education'. Nat Ach.; GIS 1/179.

73 ibid. p2 & 3.

74 Council of Education, 'The Curriculum of the Secondary School', Dublin: Stationery Office, 1962, Pr 5996, p 184.

in Education Team" was published in 1965[75]. It was preceded in 1964 by another OECD sponsored report on a particular facet of the Irish Education System: Training of Technicians[76]

Unlike the 1958 Programme for Economic Expansion, the 1964 Second Programme for Economic Expansion had a full Chapter on education, which while stressing the spiritual and cultural roles of education, also utilised the concepts of 'investment' and manpower needs[77]. In particular, there was a recognition of the potential for additional utilisation of the VEC institutions in providing technical education suitable for industrial skills. This emphasis continued in the Third Programme for 1969 to 1972.[78]

Over a period of ten years, the school leaving age was formally altered from 14 to 15 (1972) and public education expenditures grew from 3.05% of GNP in 1961/62, to 5.53% in 1966 and 6.29% in 1973/74[79]. Education's share of Public Capital Expenditure rose from 4.22% in 1966 to 8.23% in 1971/72[80]

The funding followed policy initiatives. The first was the May 1963 announcement by Minister Hillery of five specific initiatives of long term implications.

- The establishment of comprehensive, 12-15 year old post-primary schools in certain areas.
- The extension of the continuation course in vocational schools.
- A common Intermediate Certificate Examination 'core' for secondary and vocational school pupils.
- A technical school Leaving Certificate to be available in *"a local technical school."*
- The provision of a limited number of *"Technological Colleges with Regional status."*[81].

The analysis presented in this announcement pre-empted the Investment in Education team, not just in its underlying paradigmatic assumptions, but in its specifics. The non-participation in post-primary education of one third of student cohorts living in areas which have neither secondary nor vocational school was unacceptable.

> *As I see it, the equality of educational opportunity towards which it is the duty of the state to strive must nowadays entail the opportunity of some post-primary education for all.*[82].

Two principal ideas were used to anchor the new ventures proposed. Firstly

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75 Investment in Education, Vol. 1, Dublin: Stationery Office, 1965. Pr 8311.
76 OECD (1964) Training of Technicians in Ireland: OECD Review of National Policies for Science and Education. Paris: OECD.
77 Second Programme for Economic Expansion, (Part II), Dublin:Stationery Office, 1964, Prl 7670, Ch. 8, pp193-194.
78 Third Programme: Economic and Social Development, 1969 - 1972, Dublin Stationery Office, 1969, Prl. 431.
79 Sheehan, J. (1975) Educational Expenditure in Ireland, NESC Report No. 12, Dublin:National Economic & Social Council, p38.
80 ibid.
81 Statement by Dr. PJ. Hillery, T.D. Minister for Education in regard to Post-Primary Education, 20th May, 1963, in OECD (1969) Review of National Policies for Education in Ireland, Paris. Also in N.A., GIS, 1/179. References in what follow related to National Archive copy of Statement in Mimeo format.
82 ibid, para. 12, p5.

...the whole plan is a move in the direction, not only of a better co-ordination of our entire educational system, but of equality of educational opportunity.[83]

Secondly the proposals would address the general problem which arose from the secondary school and the vocational school operating in *"watertight compartments."* These institutions could no longer be *"conducted as separate and distinct entities with no connecting link whatsoever between them"*[84]. The *"Investment in Education"* Report was published in 1965. The principal result of the analysis of educational requirements and supply, using the growth assumptions of the Second Programme for Economic Expansion for the period 1964 - 1970, was that there would be a very large surplus of school leavers with minimum i.e. primary qualifications, for whom employment opportunities would not be available. An equally large deficit in those requiring a minimum of junior post-primary qualifications would exist.[85] Substantial additional places at post-primary level were necessary for economic development to occur as planned. Mobilising resources to respond to this analysis was the major challenge to a government committed to economic expansion.

The first of the new comprehensive schools was opened in 1966, the last one in 1974[86]. In 1966, Hillary's successor as Minister, George Colley, wrote to the managerial authorities of all secondary and vocational schools suggesting in the interest of providing comprehensive curricular options to all post-primary pupils, that vocational and secondary schools should co-operate and pool personnel and material resources[87]. In 1968, the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Education, in an article in the journal 'Studies' introduced the concept of a *"Community school"*, suggesting rather than separate vocational and secondary schools, that *".. single community schools are the rational requirement in most centres...."*[88] In 1970, the Community School was formally launched as the preferred state provision in areas where agreement could be reached on the amalgamation of existing vocational and secondary schools and in areas of rapidly expanding population[89]. The first Community school was opened in 1973.[90]. In 1964, a scheme of building grants for secondary schools was announced.[91] In 1967, a scheme of *"Free Education"* was introduced which allowed secondary schools to replace fees they had thither to charged, by a supplementary grant in lieu of fees, from the state[92].

The building programmes required to cope with the additional places, expanded dramatically from estimated £2.2m. in post-primary (Secondary & Vocational) schools in 1961/62, to £9.02 m in

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83 ibid, para. 27, p14.
84 ibid, para. 13, p6.
85 Sheehan (1975) p32.
86 See Tussing D. (1978) Irish Educational Expenditures, - Past, Present and Future, Dublin: ESRI, Paper No. 92 p66-67.
87 Minister for Education 'Letter to the Authorities of Secondary and Vocational Schools, January 1966, reproduced in Randles, (1975), p338 - 342.
88 O'Connors (1968) "Post Primary Education: Now & In The Future", in Studies Vol. 57, No. 227 p 247.
89 Sheehan (1975) p 35.
90 Tussing (1978) p 67.
91 Tussing (1978) p 66-67 Sheehan (1975) p 65. For secondary schools, all capital expenditure was privately financed until 1964/65. By 1974, approximately 70% of most capital costs were met by the State and a loan of 30%, repayable over 15 years was available for the remainder. Significantly, the announcement was made by the Taoiseach, Mr Lemass. See speech G.S.F. Lemass, Taoiseach, following address by Mr John Vaizey on "Economics of Education", St. Patrick Training College, Drumcondra, 13/02/1964 in Nat. Arch S17592/95.
92 Letter to Secondary School Managers, from Department of Education Feb. 1967 reproduced in Randles (1975) p 343-345.

1973/74[93]. Of even greater significance is the shift of sourcing of these funds. In 1961/62, according to Sheehan's (1975) estimates, 80% of post-primary capital funding was privately funded by religious orders and others. The remaining 19% was state expenditure in the VEC system. In 1973/74, private (or Church) investment had fallen to a mere 3% of the total, and 13% of the enlarged investment was state funds applied to private (or Church related) secondary schools. The proportion of capital investment going to the VEC sector had fallen to 16% of the total, and the bulk, 61% was being expended on the new comprehensive or community schools[94]. The effects of the *"Free Education"* scheme in the substitution of fees by a state grant also impacted most on the private secondary sector, as vocational schools did not charge fees to any significant extent[95].

As can be seen from table 7.5 the immediate impact of these changes were enrolment increases which moved from a steady annual rate of increase of 5.6% in the period 1957 to 1966, to an increase of 14% in 1967/68 and 12% the following year. Tables 7.5 and 7.6 (p144, 147) show show how in general terms, the 'market share' of post-primary school held by vocational schools remained stable. In 1965, 26% of post-primary pupils attended vocational schools. The proportion fluctuated to a low of 23% in 1979 and 1980, having been at 27% in 1971 and 1972. By 1992, it had returned to a 26% share. Secondary schools had lost overall share to the new comprehensive and community schools slipping from 74% in 1965 to 61% in 1993, by which time the community and comprehensive schools provided for 13% of pupils.

The 1962 VEC (Amendment) Act
The Changing Role of the Local Contribution

The terms of the 1930 VEC Act provided for three sources of funding for VEC activity - state grants, local authority contributions levied from the rates, and fees plus other receipts[96]. The act prescribed a maximum rate in the pound at which local authorities might levy a rate for vocational education, - at four pence in the pound in counties, and six pence in the pound in county boroughs and urban authorities[97]. These limits were increased by amendment in 1944, 1947, 1950 and in 1953, by which time 32 authorities were authorised to levy a rate of eighteen pence in the pound, and six authorities were authorised to go to fifteen pence[98]. The legislation provided for the VEC itself to increase the vocational education rate by a maximum of one penny in the pound each year. It also provided that the rate could be raised by up to two pence in the pound annually with the express prior consent of the local rating authority. These arrangements had produced a situation where overall current funding of VEC activities was supported by the central exchequer and the local authority in ratios in which the

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93 Sheehan (1975) p 65, Table 3-4.
94 ibid.
95 Sheehan (1975) p 35.
96 Vocational Education Act 1930, Part IV. No. 29 of 1930.
97 ibid, third schedule.
98 N.A. S. 17238/62: File VEC (Amendment) Act, 1962, Memorandum from Dept of Local Government for Government meeting 13/4/1962. See Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1953, No 37 of 1953, Section 1.

local contribution fluctuated at around 60% of the central contribution paid by grants from the Department of Education[99]. The 1962 legislation, in recognition of the increasing demands on VECs, raised the maximum local rate to twenty-four pence in the pound and allowed the local authority to approve an annual increase of the order of three pence in the pound[100]. This proposal generated considerable opposition from the Department of Local Government, which argued vehemently that *"vocational education is more a national than a local service and that the financing of Vocational Education Committees should be reviewed on that basis"*[101]. Arguments from the Minister for Education that *"monies invested in vocational education by rate payers and tax payers will, in the future yield enhanced dividends"*, were sufficiently persuasive[102]. The Bill was passed in November 1962[103]. The absolute value of local contributions from the rating authority continued to rise to 1987, from £898,000 in 1962 to £2.574m, twenty five years later in 1987. But as a proportion of the level of state grant, the local contribution went into rapid decline, from being approximately 50% in 1962, to being 1.2% in 1987, and a mere 0.4% in 1994. The decline in proportions began to slip in 1963, when the Central Exchequer began to assume greater financial responsibility for the expanding system. In 1987, a revised funding arrangement was agreed between the Department of the Environment, the government department for the Local Authorities and the Department of Education. The net effect was that all VEC funding now came from the Central Exchequer with the local rate no longer significant as a financial source.

The Regional Technical Colleges & Industrial Training

The Regional Technical Colleges, announced in 1963 by Hillery, took a little longer to come into operation. In 1969, a Steering Committee on Technical Education, reported to the Minister for Education on the topic and the following year the first five Regional Technical Colleges were established[104]. The Technical Leaving Certificate did not materialise. Apprenticeship training and one, two and three year courses for technicians were developed. In 1972, the National Council for Educational Awards was established to provide a third level non-university, academic validation system for the courses in the new Colleges[105]. Growth was dramatic: between 1965 and 1982, 29,000 additional third level places were provided, of which half, 14,500, were in Regional Technical Colleges and Colleges of Technology[106]. NCEA awards rose from 93, in 1972, to 4,099 in 1983[107]. In 1992, third level VEC enrolments had reached 32,198[108]. No legislation was enacted (until 1992) for the

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99 There was considerable variation between VECs in the level of local authority rate funding. The observations here are based on national aggregates and national level series. See Dail Debates, 27/11/1962, Vol. 198 No. 1, Cols. 37-8.

100 VEC (Amendment) Act, 1962 Sections 2 & 3 - also N.A. S 172 38/62 Memorandum to Government 21/6/1962.

101 N.A. S 17238/62 Memorandum for Government Feb. 1962 p 12.

102 ibid, p14.

103 The Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1962, No. 28 of 1962.

104 Steering Committee on Higher Education (1967) Report to the Minister for Education on Regional Technical Colleges, Dublin: The Stationery Office, Tussing (1978) p 66.

105 Tussing (1985), p 66.

106 NCEA Annual Report, 1983, Dublin:National Council for Education Awards. See appendix 1, Chapter 9.

107 NESC (1985) Manpower Policy in Ireland, Dublin: NESC p 180.

108 The National Industrial and Economic Council produced a "Report on Manpower Policy in 1964; In 1965, the Irish Government published a White Paper on Manpower Policy. See NESC (1985) p47 for a discussion of the influence of 1964 OECD Council Resolution on Manpower Policy.

establishment of the Regional Technical College's or the Dublin Institute of Technology. The pragmatic view taken was that the existing concepts of 'technical education' and 'higher technical education' were sufficiently broad to carry both the technician and the expanding degree level work being undertaken by VECs in these situations. The principal function of these colleges is now defined as follows:

> *...to provide vocational and technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the state with particular reference to the region served by the college....*[109].

NCEA legislation provided for sub-degree level awards, and one a two year certificates and three year Diplomas, as well as four year degree programmes and post-graduate awards. Concern about "academic drift" became a recurring theme in discourse on RTC development[110]. The 1995 White Paper identified the 'primary focus of the colleges as "to provide non-degree level programmes and a limited level of degree provision"[111]. The HEA Steering Committee recommended in 1995 an increase from a current level of 16% degree programme enrolment to a 20% level, across the RTC sector as whole[112].

The language of manpower policy was employed throughout the sixties in discourse on economic development. "Manpower adjustment measures" to adapt the pattern of labour supply to a given pattern of labour demand were debated in policy documentation. A Government White Paper on Manpower Policy, in 1965 addressed training needs in terms of:

- the need for a greatly increased industrial training programme.
- the need to assign to one agency the overall control and direction of manpower measures[113].

The most immediate response was the 1967 Industrial Training Act.

The 1931 Apprenticeship Act designated the Minister for Industry and Commerce as responsible for the administration of an apprenticeship system, for which training would be provided by VECs. We have seen in Ch. 7 Part I, the relatively low levels of growth experienced in that area until the mid 1950's. The 1959 Apprenticeship Act vested the relevant powers of the Minister for Industry and Commerce in a new statutory body, An Ceard Comhairle, (The Apprenticeship Board), with a full time staff to develop the apprenticeship system and to arrange with the VECs the provision of courses of instruction for apprentices[114]. The Board was representative of employers and trade unions and the education interests i.e., Department of Education and VECs[115]. The conditions for admission to apprenticeships were drafted by the new Board and included the requirement that entrants to an apprenticeship would present with a number of pass grades in either the Day Group Certificate

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109 Regional Technical Colleges Act, 1992, Section 5. The phrase 'with particular reference to the region served by the College' was omitted from the Regional Technical College Bill as initially published and was included by amendment at Committee stage.

110 See HEA (1995) Report of the Steering Committee on the Future Development of Higher Education, Dublin: HEA p 31. The first Business Studies degree awards by the NCEA in RTCs, was in 1978.

111 White Paper on Education (1995), p 95.

112 HEA (1995) opcit. p35. Since 1970, City of Dublin VEC had made degree awarding arrangements with the University of Dublin, (Trinity College) for the award of university degrees on the basis of professional courses completed at its technological colleges. See CDVEC Response to 1985 Green Paper on Education, March 1996, p 31. These arrangements continued to 1997. See Press Release: Minister for Education: Dublin Institute of Technology - Degree Awarding Powers." 12/12/1996.

113 See NESC (1985), p 49-50.

114 Apprenticeship Act (1959). No. 39 of 1959. Section 39 (i).

115 NESC (1985) p 100.

Examination of the Department of Education (Technical Instruction Branch) or the Intermediate Certificate Examination of the Department of Education (Secondary Branch)[116]. The Board indicated that "An Chomhairle would prefer that the majority of future entrants to apprenticeship should have (the Group Certificate) qualification. as it considers that as a general rule, full time attendance at the Junior Day Course in a Technical School is the appropriate educational preparation for Apprenticeship"[117]. Between 1960 and 1965, the number of vocational schools rose from 289 to 342, (53 new schools) and whole-time day students on Continuation Courses increased from 26,000 to 35,000. But industrial training was becoming a broader area of concern and traditional approaches were being examined in the mid - 1960's. The 1967 Industrial Training Act implemented the programme of a 1965. White Paper.

An Industrial Training Authority was established to: -

> *(a) provide for the training of persons for the purpose of any activity of industry and*
> *(b) to promote, facilitate, encourage, assist, co-ordinate and develop the provision of such training by such means as An Comhairle considered necessary or desirable.*[118]

The remit of the new authority was extensive both in terms of its statewide remit, and its remit for all training for any activity of industry. The link with VECs in respect of Apprenticeship education was continued, but weaker:

> *An Chomhairle may, with the consent of the Minister for Education, make arrangement for the provision by a Vocational Education Committee of courses of instruction in the nature of technical education of a type which an Chomhairle and the Vocational Education Committee agree is suitable for persons employed by way of apprenticeship in designated industrial activity.*[119].

From 1959 to 1967, apprentices numbers enrolled on VEC run courses rose from 2,987 to 9,524. In 1983, they reached a peak of 16,653[120]. The VEC element of apprenticeship training, (mostly at Regional Technical Colleges & Colleges of Technology after 1974) were but a portion of the developing training effort of the Industrial Training Authority-AnCo. In 1971, the Authority established the first of its permanent training centres and by 1985 there were 18,[121] and in 1995 a total of twenty[122]. At the Training Centres courses are provided of an industrial and commercial nature, for unemployed and redundant workers, those wishing to update their skills, or change careers, and for school leavers unable to obtain employment. Training allowances are paid to trainees; accommodation and travel costs are subsidised and all training costs borne by the authority. By 1984, trainee numbers in permanent centres had grown to 15,100 persons. In addition, in 1984 12,300 people were provided with industrial training on "external courses", 5,000 on community related training projects and a

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116 First Annual Report of An Cheard Chomhairle 1961. p 3.
117 ibid.
118 Industrial Training Act, 1967, No. 5 of 1967, Section 9 (1).
119 ibid. Section 32 (1).
120 Data from Department of Education Reports, Various years. Apprentices fluctuated from 10,192 in 1966 to 15,412 in 1975, to 21,498 in 1981 and back to 15,968 in 1985 and further to 12,698 in 1993. AnCo Apprenticeship Statistics 1966 -1983, and 1975-85, 1993 figures from Report of FAS to Kerry VEC, January 1994.
121 NESC (1985) p 103.
122 FAS Training Course list, 30 June 1995.

projects and a further 2,900 workshops for early school leavers. When added to the 3,900 who were first year apprentices provided for directly by the Authority in their own centres rather than in VEC institutions, a total of 39,000 persons were in work related training under the aegis of the Industrial Training Authority, in 1985.[123] A budget of £105.94 million was utilised by the authority in 1983.[124]

In the same year, the total VECs expenditure was £167.57 million.[125] Further reorganisation of the Training Authority under the 1988 Labour Services Act has not significantly altered the thrust of the national training agencies industrial and community training work.[126] It is apparent, that the industrial training dimension of manpower policy delivery was, for the most part, lost to the VEC sphere of influence by the delivery of training by the national training agency.

In 1963, a state training agency for the Hotel, Catering and Tourism industry (CERT) was established which utilised VEC Colleges and schools for the delivery of its programme. In 1988, CERT trained 7,664 people, of whom 2,330 were in school or college based course, and 4,580 received "on the job training.[127] The corporate plan of the agency includes the "provision of formal training through the VEC system", as well as 'regular liaison with the Department of Education'. In its development CERT has continued the model operated by the first Apprenticeship Board, An Ceard Comhairle, and maintained close links for delivery purposes with the VEC institutions.[128] Industrial and general labour training, however, has developed strong alternative structures for provision and development. The result has been interdepartmental and inter-institutional competition in the field of human resource development for employment.

The series of initiatives in the period 1962 - 1970, establishing new institutional arrangements in Irish education, were built around key dimensions of the Human Capital approach to education: -

- education and the manpower requirements of the economy
- efficiency in the allocation and utilisation of educational resources
- the socio-economic implications of educational participation[129].

The human capital approach to education planning continued in the Green Paper, National Development, 1977-1980, and the 1980 White Paper on Education, the 1982 National Economic Plan, 'The Way Forward' the 1984 plan, Building on Reality, and the 1989 National Development Plan

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122 FAS Training Course list, 30 June 1995.

123 Ibid.

124 NESC (1985) p 103 Table 4.3.

125 ibid. p132, Table 4.4.

126 See Gallagher. L. (1994) Vocational Education & Training in Ireland Berlin: CEDEFOP p 67.

127 CERT (1988) CERT Silver Jubilee - Annual Report. p 5.

128 A further agency, the NRB, The National Rehabilitation Board was established in 1962 under the Health Corporate Bodies Act, 1962 to co-ordinate training for disabled persons. See Gallagher. L. (1994) Vocational Education and Training in Ireland, Berlin CEDEFOP p 68.

129 Sheehan (1989) 'Education and the Economy' Mimeo for Department of Education Home Country Report to OECD Review Team." p 2. The author is grateful to Mr Sheehan for access to this paper. A summarised version is published in OECD (1991).

1989-93. The language continues in 1996 NESC, "Strategy into the 21st Century" and the 1997, White Paper on Human Resource Development.[130]

The impetus of the first application of human capital analysis has guided a series of education and training policy initiatives with critical implications for the operation of the Vocational Education Committees. In 1970, the Vocational Education Act 1930 was amended to allow for the co-operative provision of post-primary schooling between VEC's and other school managements. Significantly, the language of the 1970 VEC (Amendment) Act continued the use of the term "continuation education." However, in this context it was understood to relate to the provision of post-primary education of a comprehensive nature. The distinction between, 'continuation' secondary education and 'general' secondary education, so significant in the early decades, was now collapsed.

In the 1990's, Human Resource Development programmes have been presented in four major categories involving all the national education and training agencies: the first is Initial Education & Training with the Department of Education through the Universities, Regional Technical Colleges and Dublin Institute of Technology, VECs and other second-level schools, and FAS, the National Training and Employment Agency, all identified as agencies responsible[131]. Of the remaining programmes, "*Continuing Training for the Unemployed*", and the "*Adaptation to Industrial Change*", are the responsibility of the National Training Agency, FAS.[132] The fourth programme, "*The Re-integration of the Socially Excluded*" is jointly shared between FAS, the Department of Education the VEC's and a range of other statutory and non-governmental organisations.[133] Of the £1,430m allocated under the 1994-1999 Human Resources Development programme, £843m or 58% of the total was allocated to the 'Education Sector' and 31% allocated to the National Training Agency, FAS.[134] Under the rubric of Initial Education and Training, VEC's, through their second level schools participate in the provision of vocationally related programmes. From their first identification in 1977 Department of Education statistical report, the numbers have grown 8,629 in 1977, to 10,707 in 1983, to 18,722 in 1993.[135] It is to be noted that the formal initiation of this second level initiative took the form of a set of guidelines from the Department of Education to second-level schools about the conduct of 'Pre-Employment Courses", issued in June 1977, to VECs. Two points of significance. Firstly, the citation in the introduction to the documents of the concept of "Continuation education" as defined in the VEC Act, 1930, together with the elaboration of the concept as in the 1942, Memorandum V40, on the

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130 National Development 1977-1980, Dublin: Stationery Office, 1979, Prl. 7618; White Paper on Educational Development, Dublin:Stationery Office, 1980 Prl. 9373; The Way Forward, Dublin: Stationery Office, 1982, Prl. 1061; Building on Reality, Dublin: Stationery Office, 1984, Prl. 2648;
National Development Plan, 1989 - 1993, Dublin: Stationery Office, 1989, Prl. 6342;
NESC (1996) A Strategy for the 21st Century, Dublin: NESC see p38. Dept. of Enterprise & Employment, (1997) White Paper: Human Resource Development, Dublin: Government of Ireland: Prl. 3881.

131 Government of Ireland (1995) Ireland: Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 1994-1999, Dublin: The Stationery Office, p 10.

132 ibid. p 43 & 86.

133 ibid. p 58. The National Rehabilitation Board and the Department of Justice and the most significant of the other agencies.

134 Department of Enterprise and Employment (1997) White Paper or Human Resources. Dublin: Stationery Office, p 70. Note 33.

135 From Department of Education Statistical Reports, Various Years.

organisation of continuation courses."[136] This reference links the re-emergence of employment related courses with the pre-1960's role and conceptual framework of the VECs. It also suggests some confusion on the application of the concept, which in the 1970 VEC (Amendment) Act, linked continuation education with general secondary education - a confusion which persists. Putting this development in the context of the total second level provision, Roche and Tansey, on the basis of 1988/89 figures, argue that 5.6% of those attending second-level schools are taking explicitly vocational/training courses, and that 4% of the total are receiving their vocational courses in VEC schools, the remaining 1.6% in either Secondary or Comprehensive Community schools. Following the publication of the White Paper in Education 1995, "Charting our Education Future", the second-level terminal examination has been restructured into three components: the established (general) Leaving Certificate, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme[137]. In the new Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme students follow a full Leaving Certificate programme including two mainstream Leaving Certificate courses in technical or business disciplines, a language as well as work experience and enterprise modules. The Leaving Certificate Applied Programme provides an emphasis on vocational/technical subjects with an emphasis on active learning approaches. Both new programmes are intended to strengthen the vocational and technical dimensions of senior cycle secondary education and to encourage increased retention to completion of senior cycle.[138]

The second point of interest is the established link between this initiative and the Resolution of the Council of the European Communities and the Minister of Education's Meeting in Council, of 13/12/1976, concerning measures to be taken to improve the preparation of young people for work and to facilitate their transition from education to working life.[139] The linkage is of significance, firstly for the formal recognition of the influence of European level analyses on the planning of education in the Republic of Ireland, but secondly because it illustrates the significance of European funding for such formal economy - related initiatives in Irish educational developments.

Responding to internal and external conditions, vocationally related courses at post, Leaving Certificate level have been developed (principally) in Vocational school and known as Post Leaving Certificate Courses (PLCs). In the terminology of the 1995 White Paper on Education, these courses, with the Apprenticeship system, are designated as "Further Education."[140] According to the White Paper PLCs are principally aimed at those who have completed senior cycle educational "Their objective is to provide skills to meet the needs of the economy and to equip younh people with the Vocational and technological skills for employment and progression to further education and training'.[141] To date, statistics in the annual Department of Education statistical report have not identified PLC enrolments as

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136 Department of Education: Cursai Réamh - Fhoslaoichta (Pre-Employment Courses), June 1977

137 Department of Education (1995) Charting Our Education Future, Dublin: Stationery Office. p51-53.

138 O'Connell, P.J. Sexton J.J. (eds) 1997, Labour Market Studies: Ireland, Brussels: Employment & Social Affairs, Commission, E.U. p 119.

139 The resolution is reproduced in the Department of Education 1977 documentation, p 13-14.

140 White Paper on Education "Charting our Education Future", p 73-75.

141 ibid. p73-74.

separate, and they are included, since 1977, in total enrolments figures of post-primary, mostly VEC schools under the heading "Vocational Preparation and Training V.P.T. It is estimated that 14,000 students enrolled in PLC courses in 1994/95.[142]

The 1995 White Paper proposed two organisational developments in respect of "Further Education." Firstly, the establishment of a national Further Education Authority to co-ordinate the national effort at all vocational education and training, to advise the Minister on Further Education policy, and to allocate budgets for vocational education and training. Secondly, the establishment of a National Certification Authority for all non-university third level, and "all further and continuation education and training programmes".[143] The vocationalisation of the senior cycle programme, together with the introduction of a further education sector at Post-Leaving Certificate level, to which the term "Continuation" education is again applied, suggest the end of a cycle of development, in which the standard preparation for working life move from completion of primary schooling to completion of secondary schooling, in which the concept of continuation education was relocated from the age fourteen to eighteen, and linked to the more contemporary concept "Further Education." Whole-time technical education had found its place first in the Autonomous Regional Technical Colleges and Dublin Institute of Technology, most recently designated as the "*extra-university sector of Higher Education.*"[144]

A survey of Industrial training in Ireland, conducted in 1991 by Roche and Tansey, reported the quality of basic schooling in Ireland as "good" to "very good"; in the view of fifteen large scale employers. The Irish school system was seen as the equal of its German counterpart by foreign employers. The improvements in human resource terms between 'the well educated recruits of today (and) ... the poorly educated older workers was remarked upon'.[145].

Summary

In this Chapter archive and interview data have been utilised to explore the relationship between the VEC system and the Irish economy. We have seen the persistence of categories (technical education and continuation education) from the pre-twentieth century period to the last decade of the twentieth century in widely changed economic and social circumstances. With this language has continued a retained understanding of the role of education and training in economic development which came to fuller realisation with Human Capital Theory and the concept of investment in education in the 1960's. We have traced the generalised human and social development role undertaken by the VEC system in

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142 White Paper in Education (1995), p 74.

143 ibid. p 81-83.

144 HEA (1995) Report of the Steering Committee on the Future Development of Higher Education, Dublin: HEA p 29. Recent, (1997) initiatives suggest that a change of name/title and the power to make awards is sought and may be available to these institutions. Such a provision was incorporated into legislation establishing Dublin Institute of Technology (1992) and was activated in 1997. See Press Releases: Minister for Education 4/2/1997 "High Level Group to advise on Technological Sector", and 12/12/1996 'Degree Awarding Powers' - Dublin Institute of Technology.

145 Roche & Tansey, (1992), p 71.

the period 1930-1960 and the closeness of the relationship established with local and labour markets. We have also seen the capacity for adaptation to changed labour market conditions, markedly in the development of technician/technological training in the large urban areas, but also in the championing of development evident among VEC personnel. Finally, we have seen the centralisation and institutional fragmentation (from the VEC point of view) that occurred when, in response to the opening and internationalisation of the Irish economy, the national state rather than the local authority area became the effective unit for economic management and labour market measures. Local responsiveness, but now in the context of national initiatives, characterised the system in the later decades. In the development of mass general secondary education and diversified third level provision, the VEC become an available state instrument which eased the implementation of the new found centrality of human resource development in the state.

The passing of the 1930 Act occasioned a shift from a rhetoric of scientifically based technical education which was primarily focused on the provision of technicians for a process of industrialisation, to a more diffuse form of 'pre-vocational' education to be known as 'vocational education'. The conceptual elaboration of 'vocational education' contained in the act, facilitated a switch in emphasis from an earlier technical education for industrial expansion to a more general raising of the capacity of the state's human resources through continuation schools. The development of technical manpower for industrial development was relegated to a less significant role. The internal dynamic of the existing technical instruction system was exerting a pressure for this change.

This early change of policy emphasis, from technical education or education for industrial development to pre-vocational education, is to be understood, firstly, as part of the matrix of positions which are evident in the economic policy of the Free State governments, 1924-1959. By the mid-fifties the experiment of the new state with economic self-sufficiency was over and there commenced an extended period of development and change for Irish society, for education in general, and for the vocational education system in particular. On the one hand, the 'general education' mission of the vocational education system was further expanded. The very existence of the VEC sytem provided an administrative system available to facilitate the expansion of general, comprehensive, second-level education. The existing VEC system provided an administrative framework which supported the establishment of regional institutions for the provision of 'middle-level', technical manpower. In a series of manifestations over a thirty year period since the early 1960's, a national industrial training agency, continued to co-exist alongside the VEC system, with complementary and sometimes competing missions in respect of human resource development. A comprehensive second-level school became the modal VEC institution and its function in the formation of productive skills became less immediate and direct A new set of third level VEC institutions (the RTCs and Institutes of Technology) was developed to become the VEC 'Third level Technological Sector'.

It is argued that the VEC institutions (most particularly the continuation schools) have consistently been a key 'sorting' device for the human resources of the Irish state. In the early period, VEC institutions were delineated firmly from general education institutions, ie secondary schools. Decisions at age fourteen to attend programmes at VEC institutions became a critical point of occupational choice or allocation. This chapter outlines the responsiveness of the VEC system to local labour market conditions and its use in the context of high youth unemployment. The growing enrolments in continuation courses withheld 14-16 year-olds from the labour market. The VECs were used as the local delivery mechanism of a sequence of programmes designed to retain young people in the school system (such as 'Pre-Employment courses and Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes in the 1970's and 1980's) and programmes for the long-term unemployed, such as the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme(VTOS) in the late 1980's and 1990's.

CHAPTER 9

THE ROLE OF THE VEC IN SOCIAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL STABILITY

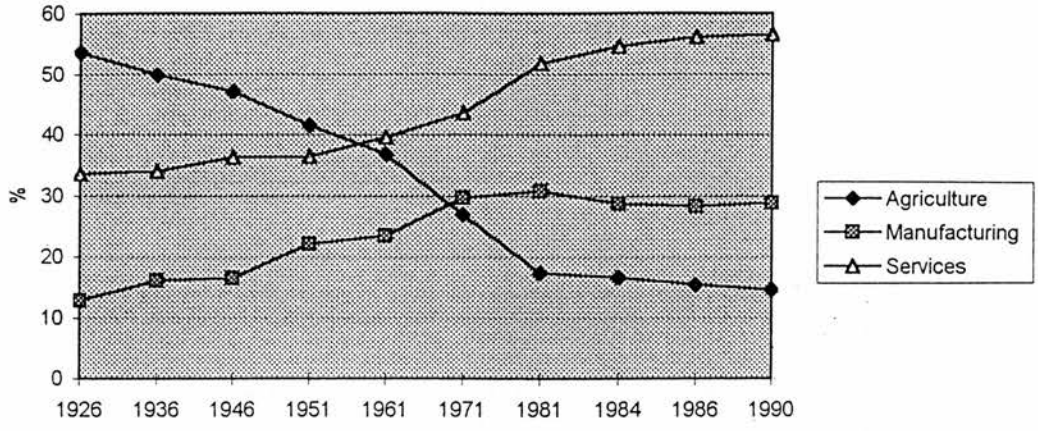
Educational institutions are sites of social and ideological contest. Pressures for social change, and for social conservation were experienced, and exerted, in VEC schools. The purpose of this Chapter is to present and interpret the experience of VEC institutions in the processes of social change which Ireland experienced over the period 1930 to 1990. It emerges that social class was submerged in the rhetoric of the VEC system by the official ideologies in Irish education up to 1960. Class consciousness was, however, central to the experience of both students and teachers in VEC institutions. It is contended that the limited range of social mobility achieved in Ireland was affected to a considerable degree by the nature and operation of the VEC system of schools and courses. Third, it is argued that the VEC system explicitly championed, (albeit with limited success) the craft, technical knowledge base among Irish working class people in the debates and the contests around the curriculum of Irish post-primary schooling. The data used in this Chapter is drawn from the semi-structured interviews conducted for this study which are quoted at length and empirical data, some from primary sources collated by the author, and some from secondary sources. A picture of class contest and conflict emerges.

Class Change in Ireland

The main dynamic of class change in Ireland between 1921 and 1961, was the mass exodus from the land. The percentage of males in agriculture fell from fifty-eight to forty-three. In percentage terms, this was counterbalanced by growth in the non-manual middle class and the non-agricultural working class. This change took place in the context of a decline in the total employment of males from 950,00 in 1926 to 820,00 in 1961. The broad stability of the class structure over this period is largely attributed to emigration.[146] This is a broad context for the first phase of the VEC story.

146 Whelan, Breen and Whelan, (1992), 'Industrialisation, Class Formation and Social Mobility in Ireland', p106. In Goldthorpe and Whelan (eds.),

Fig. 9.1
Percentage Distribution of Employment by Sectors, 1926 - 1990



Sources: Gilmor, 1985: 31 for 1926-86; Kennedy,1991: 259, for 1986-90

Between 1961 and 1985, males in agriculture, as a total of the gainfully employed, fell from forty-two to twenty percent. By 1985, employed professionals were seventeen percent of the workforce; three times their representation in 1951. Skilled manual employees increased from ten to twenty percent of the workforce. Lower middle class workers increased less dramatically from fourteen to twenty-two percent. Semi-skilled workers were nearly twenty-five percent of the workforce in 1951 and were twelve percent in 1985. Small farmers, agricultural labourers and unskilled agricultural labourers had a combined decline of 259,000 from 1951 to 1981. The upper white collar and skilled manual categories expanded by 120,000, but not until after 1961.[147] Between 1973 and 1987, there was '*a significant increase in the level of absolute mobility in Ireland... the percentage remaining in their class of origin declined from forty-three to thirty-seven percent*'- a level of change high by western standards.[148] In our second phase, social change was rapid and deep-seated. Competition for occupational mobility was keen.

Three characteristics of the change are pertinent to our considerations. Firstly, the relatively high inflow into the service class (professional, managerial and administrative class) of men from agricultural classes and a concomitant below average contribution to this group from the industrial working class. Secondly, the high inflows from farming into the petty bourgeoisie, with over a third of their members originating from farm backgrounds. There was a significant decline in the level of self-recruitment to the petty bourgeoisie. This was matched by a corresponding recruitment from the industrial working class. The numbers of skilled workers increased by fifty percent; the percentage of skilled workers from farm backgrounds almost doubled, increasing from ten to eighteen percent. Eighty percent of recruitment to the industrial working class in Ireland is drawn from small farmers,

147 ibid. p107.

148 ibid. p113. The degree of mobility that is observed in any society depends on the number, size and character of the categories distinguished. See Whelan et al, (1992) opcit.

agricultural workers and the industrial working class together[149]. The general picture of the period 1961-90 is of a rapid increase in social mobility due primarily to the expansion of service class places and the contraction or non replacement of manual and semi-skilled manual places.

The picture, however, is one of minimal mobility overall, in terms of distance between social classes and a preservation of relative status in the context of mobility.[150] The rising tide raised all boats but left them in the same relative positions in respect of one another.

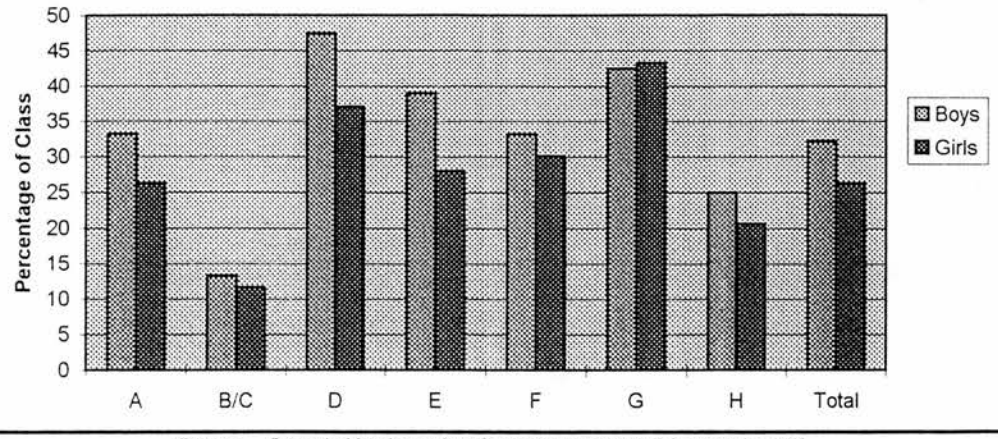
Stations in Life and Intelligence Differential Social Class Composition of VEC Students

The data collated by the Survey team appointed by the Minister for Education in 1962 and reported in '*Investment in Education*', (1965: 169) is the first empirical data in the Irish system that gives statistical evidence of the general nature of the division of labour in Irish second-level education reported in the interviews.

This survey shows a total of 30.9% of boys and 25.2% of girls had left schooling on completion of their primary education, that 32.2% of the boys and 26.3% of the girls went to vocational schools and that 48.5% of the girls and 36.9% of the boys went to secondary school courses in that year. The proportions who left school varied by social class with 10-13% of Professional and Managerial group (B&C) terminating their schooling and 45-46% of the children of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers not transferring beyond primary schooling.

149 ibid. p 125-128.
150 Breen and Whelan, (1992), p144.

Fig. 9.2
Class Distribution of Vocational School Entrants, 1962-3



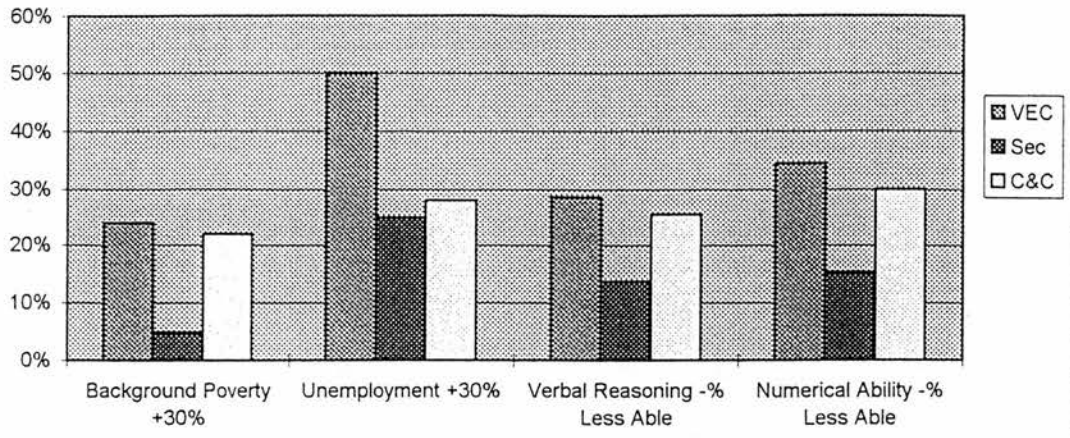
Source: Compiled by the author from 'Investment in Education', p 169

The most under-represented group in vocational schools were the children of the professional and managerial group and the intermediate non-manual workers, with 13.3% of the boys and 11.6% of the girls attending vocational school as opposed to 73.8% and 78%, respectively, attending secondary courses. Strongly represented in vocational schools are the children of 'Other non-manual workers' (category D). i.e. 'bus or lorry drivers, conductors, postmen, caretakers, waiters, and railway porters.[151] and the children of the unemployed, or those who were classified as '*..deceased and no occupation other than housewife is given for the mother' (Category G).*[152]

Data from Hannon et al (1996) confirms the continuation of an uneven distribution of social classes between school types and the continued characterisation of the VEC institutions as for working class youth after the curricular, organisational and examination reforms that took place between 1967 and 1992. (See Figure 7.13, p177) There is an over-representation of the children of skilled and unskilled parents in vocational schools and an under-representation of the children of middle class parents. Hannon et al. (1996) also report on additional data collected in the course of the National Survey on Coeducation which confirms the perceptions of interviewees on the enrolment of the Vocational school in the period from the 1960s to the 1990s. Principals in the sample schools studied in the survey were asked to report on pupil characteristics. Figure 9.3 collates some of this data and presents them in chart form.

151 ibid.
152 ibid.

Fig. 9.3
Distribution by School Type of Student Characteristics, 1993-94, Principals' Perceptions



Devised from Hannon et al. (1996), National Co-education Survey

Study Data - The Interviews

We commence our analysis by examining the recollections of a number of interviewees of the perceptions they held of the vocational school as they presented to transfer from primary school.[153]

Anthony McDonnell was born in 1939, the son of a Tralee tailor and transferred to a secondary school in 1951.[154]

> *I was aware of the VEC school here in town once I hit the secondary school. I knew it was there because one of the teachers from this school, Mr. Fitzgibbons, lived on my terrace, so I knew that it was there. So when I reached the secondary school, I was quite aware that it was a different type of school because people that would have been with me in the primary school were not with me now and they had gone, as it was known then, to the 'Tech'. And the impression that I would have gained then was the 'Tech' was for the people who didn't achieve or who weren't interested or who certainly were from the poorer areas of the town because at that time secondary education, although it wasn't expensive, there still were fees and the people who couldn't afford to pay them obviously weren't too anxious to be there. So I was very clear in my mind that the Tech. in some way or another was a different kind of school for a different class of people.'.... in fact one of the teachers that used to come down to us for music was a local musician here called Mickey Dunne and for years afterwards he worked in the technical system. But he used to delight or facetiously used to refer to the local Tech. as the 'refugium peccatorum' (*refuge of sinners). *Now that name still stuck in my mind, you know, and it was making a strong political statement, if you like, really.*

A number of points emerge from this short extract. First, the direct reference to '*...a different class of people*' suggests a utilisation, however unelaborated, of a system of hierarchical social categorisation in operation which is seen as relevant to the division of labour among schools. Second, this

153 Of the interviewees, who were selected for their participation as members of the education policy community, only one, Joe Rooney, attended a vocational school.

categorisation is related to two characteristics of people, their achievement (presumably in primary school), and a related interest in achievement, on the one hand, and their ability to pay fees for secondary school on the other hand. Third, the latter section of the passage, reporting the deprecating comments of a music teacher who taught both secondary and vocational or 'Tech', students, suggests a quasi-moral judgment about the category of young person attending the vocational school. These three elements, relative academic ability, disposable family income or relative wealth, and quasi-moral, status or prestige related judgements, are consistent elements in the perceptions around attendance at vocational schools. Rooney, who attended a vocational school in Galway in the early 1950's, confirms the position. Rooney's father was an electrician (skilled worker) with the national Electricity Company, ESB.

The general tenor of perceptions is reflected in the following extract from the **Rooney** interview, in which the General Secretary of IVEA recalls his own experiences of the social in the mid-fifties, alongside his later experiences as a teacher in a Galway city vocational school:

> *... my experience of Moneenageesha (Voc. Sch., Galway City), was that it had a fair amount of students from the town but actually drew most of its students from outside the town, funnily enough ,and it was families and cousins that kept coming all the time.*
>
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *The thing you mentioned - when you talk about respectability, doing the Leaving Certificate for respectability - was that an issue, respectability.*
>
> ***Rooney***
>
> *Ah yes it was, 'the Tech down the road' stuff was always there, a problem for all of us that we didn't stand up against it. We tried to kind of go around it, like changing names of institutions and things like that you know, putting up fancy flags and things. There was never an attempt to say "What's wrong with the word 'Tech'? ." That has never been done but, ah yes... There was a class thing. For example, now when I left the primary school, when I was leaving primary school, I was with the Patrician Brothers in Nuns Island in Galway and everyone kind of expected me to go straight across the road to what they called "The Bsht" you know, the Patrician Secondary school and I said I've had all the school that I can take and I wouldn't go. And that was regarded those days as kind of regressive, you know. You know, the fact that you wouldn't opt to go to the secondary, you were going to go over to the Tech, further away from home. Now over in Fr. Griffin Road,* (the vocational school in Galway, referred to by its address-BOR.) *you see, you had your two year course and that was the end of story. Now I'll tell you something they were the happiest two years of my life. I loved it there and I didn't want to leave. Now when I got my Group Cert. I had to leave and I didn't want to leave. As it turns out then a job that I wanted didn't turn up and I was hanging in there. I was going to try and do sort of a repeat year but unfortunately a job turned up and I had to take it. But certainly, like, the fact that you went to the Tech was, certainly wasn't on, you know, socially.*

As well as confirming a generalised perception of the class significance of the vocational school choice, the above observations by Rooney indicated one element of the relative disadvantage of the vocational school programme as perceived. The length of the Continuation course, leading (after 1947) to the 'Group Certificate, was two years. A programme of two years compared unfavourably with the four-year Intermediate and six-year Leaving Certificate programmes. Further, when Rooney says:

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154 Anthony McDonnell became a member of the Irish Christian Brothers, a secondary school principal and subsequently a provincial superior in the order and a representative of religious orders in national negotiations on education. Source:Interview for this study.

'...a job turned up and I had to take it', he conveys both a sense of family financial or other pressure to join the workforce, and at the same time a sense of unfulfilled educational aspirations.[155] Asked whether his brothers and sisters also attended the Vocational school, Rooney replied: *'They all went there, yea, and my cousins, yes'*. Sean McCarthy went to a secondary school in the late fifties and early sixties. His father was small-holder and also worked on the farm of the Kenmare estate. For him:

> *Well, I was the first one in my family to go to secondary school. My father and mother had left ... at the end of primary school. So I went to the 'Sem.'[156] and they saw that as the logical place to go....it seemed to be the accepted wisdom.*

When asked about his perceptions of the social focus of the VECs, McDwyer, who had been appointed as a graduate Rural Science teacher in 1939, as an Inspector of the Technical Instruction Branch (TIB) in 1944 and CEO for Kerry in 1948, took a more extended view, distinguishing between attendance at evening classes and the day continuation school:

> ***O'Reilly***
> *The social focus: in the rural and small town setting, was there a group within the total community which were the particular focus of the vocational school, were there groups... ?*
> ***McDwyer***
>
> *Hard to say. I think quite obviously the night classes and the RDS lectures, the adult, the emerging adult education programme, of the vocational schools, of both rural and urban now, had a very, very important contribution to the improvement of social life in the towns and districts where they operated. But I think it was a more personal appeal rather than to any particular group. You had banker's wives as well as labourers wives in domestic science classes, you know. And I think the social mix was excellent really.*
>
> *What about the day classes?*
> ***McDwyer***
> *Oh no, no. Day class students came from the B&C social classes.[157] Very much so. Very little, practically none of the professional classes sons and daughters, not very much of the business classes either, workers and - one hates to say a thing like 'the lower social classes', because many were extremely fine people, but it was very much school for the workers' children, always, always.*
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *Was that something that was resisted or accepted as the way it ought to be?*
> ***McDwyer***
>
> *Ah, I think it was a product of long, long years of tradition. I mean, for a century education, second level education, was an associated with preparation for professions, and for church and for leaving, for leaving, leaving the working ambiance.*
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *Was there any difference between urban VEC provision and say rural and small town?*
> ***McDwyer***
>
> *Well, I think, in the rural and small town you have more of a general mix. Very often it is the only convenient school you see. And as well as that, people in rural areas tended to be much*

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155 Rooney subsequently completed an apprenticeship as a woodworker in the course of which he took Trade examinations of the Dept. of Education as apart-time student in the Vocational school. He went on to work at his trade in England. He was admitted to the teachers programme for vocational school teachers and qualified as a teacher in 1966. In 1976, as a teacher in a Galway vocational school and a national figure in the vocational teachers union, he took a BA by part-time study at University College, Galway. Source: Interview for this study.

156 St. Brendan's College, Killarney, known as 'The Sem.', an abbreviated version of 'the seminary'. Owned and staffed by the Roman Catholic diocese of Kerry, St. Brendan's College was established as a minor seminary for the secondary education of priests.

157 It is apparent from the context that McDwyer uses the term 'B&C classes' to refer to 'the lower social classes' and is not following the terminology of Census reports.

less, again I don't like to use the word 'snobbery', but there was an element of that, you know. You had far more of enlightened people (in rural areas and small towns), who looked to children and would say: "This one will never be any good at the books but may do well with their hands'. That was a very desirable development. There wasn't much of it now, but there was certainly more of it in the country and in the smaller schools than there was in the bigger towns.

The reference to difference in class composition of students at vocational schools as between town and rural schools and the link made with accessibility or 'convenience' draws attention to a perception of the relative cost of vocational education already identified in the McDonnell observations. McDwyer draws attention also to the relative advantage to farm families that derived from the development of the 'rural vocational school.' The primacy of the 'rural vocational school' in the expansion of the vocational education system in the period 1932-1960, (see Chapter 7) had the effect of reducing the cost of attendance for the farm children and gave the schools a competitive advantage in respect of attracting rural youth.[158] McDwyer identified a tendency of 'less *snobbery'* among rural people. Hannon & Cummins, (1992: 103), refer to the *'cultural adaptiveness of families and individuals from the older peasant, or small farmer communities'*. This cultural adaptiveness is exemplified in the way small farm-holders have disproportionately benefited from industrial expansion policy and adapted with relative success to the educational demands of the modernising labour market. The 'stem family system', with stronger ties of mutual support, higher and more varied mobility aspirations, and more widely dispersed kinship and status connections developed over generations of emigration, is offered as a distinguishing and decisive difference between small-farm holders and the working class.[159] For the period 1932-1950, Fig. 9.4 illustrates the differential that developed almost immediately between enrollment in Continuation classes in County schemes, largely rural, and the Urban and County Borough schemes. County schemes expanded their enrolment of wholetime students from 2,175 in 1932/33 to 8,818 in 1949/50; while city and urban schemes grew from 1,720 to 4,905, or at approximately half the rate, in the same period.

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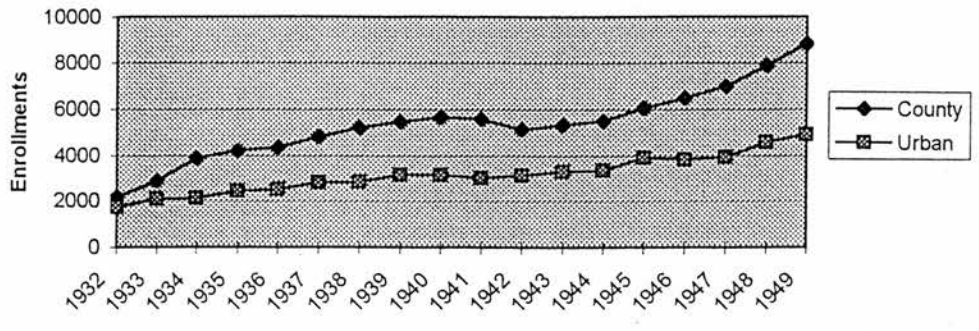
158 In 1963, there were 80 small towns, villages and rural centres in which the only post-primary provision was a vocational school. Secondary schools were sole providers in 47 such centres. See Investment in Education, Report, (1966), Table 12.1, p323.

159 See Hannon and Cummins (1992), 'The Significance of Small-Scale landholders in Ireland's Socio-Economic Transformation', in Goldthorpe & Whelan .(eds.), p79-104. The 'stem family' system became established in post-famine Ireland, as a response to the traumatic failure of an older system of sharing farm inheritance among Irish peasants. The stem system meant that one son was chosen to inherit the family farm rights (or ownership). It was in the economic interests of those who remained on the farm that all unnecessary labour, especially daughters, emigrate if they did not intend to remain single. (Inglis,1987: 174) For a discussion of the 'stem family' see Hannon, D.F. (1979) Displacement and Development: Class, Kinship and Social Change in Irish Rural Communities' Dublin: The Economic and Social Research Institute, and Hannon, D.F. and Katsiaouni, L., (1977), Traditional Families?, Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute. See also McCullagh, C., (1991), 'A Tie that Binds: Family and Ideology in Ireland', The Economic and Social Review, Vol.22, No,3, April 1991, pp199-211.

Fig. 9.4
County and Urban Enrolment in Wholetime Continuation Courses (-16), 1932/33-49/50



Source:Department of Education Reports: Various Years

Lysaght, who was a teacher and Principal teacher in Mallow Vocational school, recalled the strength of rural attendance in that school when he started to teach there in 1962. He offers a more 'school-led' explanation for the relative strength of farm children attendance at vocational schools.[160]

> *... when I went to Mallow first, something which has always puzzled me, that of the one well off sections of society that was very well represented was the farming community. And gradually by questioning and by talking to people, I discovered that this was it: - meeting the parents when they come in, and 'Oh sure, I remember your boss, he used come out now, do you remember that little hall out there, he used give us lectures there and seed testing and all of that, and show us, and advise us on what the best type of seed to plant and all of that'. So they built up a huge, huge connection with the local community, agricultural community. And they were suppliers of students for us. And that didn't cease until the late 70s when the numbers coming from farmers, farmers children, practically declined completely. I recognise there a major influence on the part of mothers and a major social dimension to the status of the school, a consciousness of the school.*
>
> *...And we lost them...*

Data from Hannon, (1970: 65-82) which reports on a study of youths in Co. Cavan, provides information on the distribution of farm children in the schooling system in the early sixties. It appears that farm families were more willing, generally, to send their daughters to post-primary education, with smaller proportions not proceeding after primary schools.

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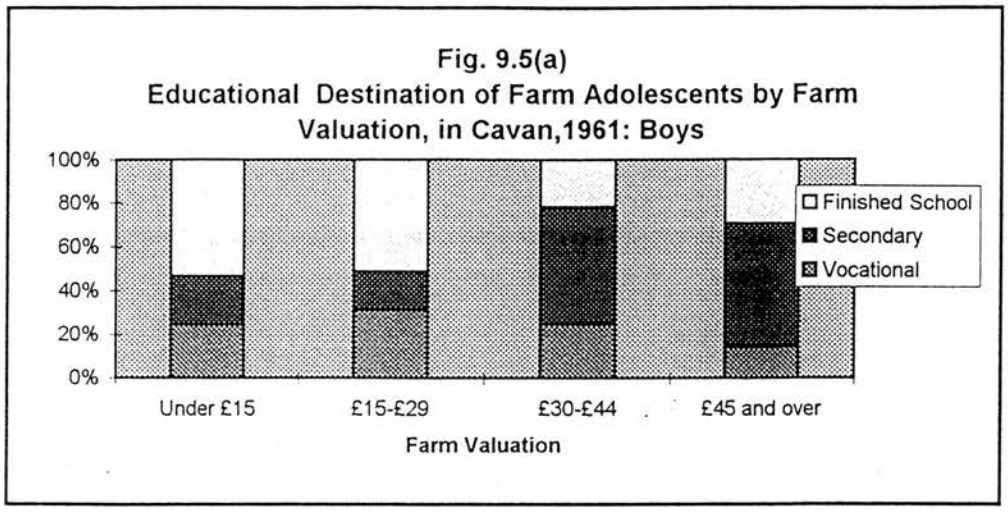
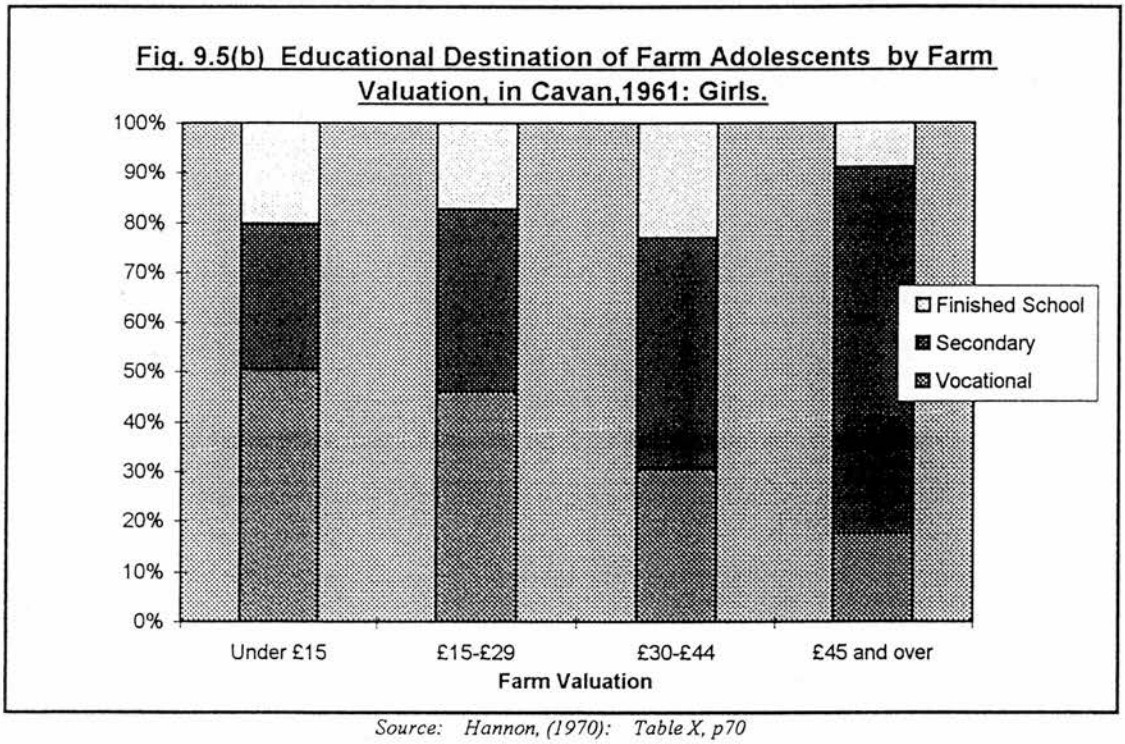
160 Lysaght started as a vocational teacher of commerce in 1962; he became Principal in 1981 and retired in 1992. The interview reported here was conducted on 22/5/1995.





Source: Hannon, (1970): Table X, p70

In the case of both boys and girls it is noted that the proportion attending vocational schools diminishes with increased valuation. In more general terms, Hannon characterised the distribution in Cavan in 1961 as follows: '*Vocational education ... is to a large extent confined to small farm and working class youth*'.[161]

For the larger towns, things were not different. In Mallow, the vocational school did not attract the children of certain classes:

161 Hannon, (1970), p72.

Socially, you see, when you examine the situation within a school, in a town like Mallow, we rarely got a guard's son, a teacher's son, a shopkeeper's son, very rarely, civil servant's son, county council, you would get a few from the post office maybe, but you didn't get, it was classified, stratified if you like from that down. So you know, I would say, and it was a prejudice really that, I don't know really how it developed. I mean I had to re-educate myself when I went in - that took me about 2 years to come to terms, to see... (Lysaght Interview)

Lysaght expresses some difficulty in explaining the basis for the differentiation that was occurring. One recurring factor is the positing of intelligence differentials between students attending vocational schools and those attending secondary schools.

The extract above from the McDwyer interview reveals this view as operating among the farming population:

You had far more of enlightened people who looked to children and would say: 'This one will never be any good at the books but may do well with their hands'. That was a very desirable development.

McDwyer's acceptance is apparent for the division of ability or human resource potential, into two kinds, academic or rational -mathematical and manual or psycho-motor. Lysaght also reports this view and is less accepting of it, seeing in it an adverse judgement on the teaching staff. The staff in his school in the 1960's, at the introduction of a common post-primary programme:

...were very conscious of the public view on all of us teaching there and on the system - you know you would be constantly reminded: 'How was Johnny getting on? He's not much good really, but do the best you can with him. His brother is brilliant now. He's going to the Brothers, (the boys' secondary school) or his sister is brilliant.' The inability, the perception that we were unable to teach gifted people, you know.

Tony McDonnell went as Christian Brother principal to their secondary school in 1972. In retrospect, the social dimension of the relationship between schools was uncritically accepted.

I went to Templemore, I was headmaster in Templemore there in 1972-75 and it was just at the time when the effect of the Donogh O'Malley scheme (abolition of school fees and introduction of a school transport service) was making itself significantly felt and the numbers in the secondary schools were rising. So there was a small little Tech. in the town run by a man called Mr. Fitzgibbons. Now in effect, like, there was no connection much between the two schools. I knew the headmaster because I had his son in school and I knew the woodwork teacher because I had his son in school. But it was a small little VEC school. It ran its own little show. And again, I would have to say that if you were doing some kind of a social analysis of the town what you would have found was that the ambitious with third level aspirations or anxious say to get a good academic education - they were all arriving up in our school. Whereas, I suppose, the youngsters who came from the poorer background, whose parents had no maybe background in education themselves, who may not have seen the value of it much, they drifted in there for a few years. And like, we were never hostile in any way but we did no kind of analyses. I think, at that time, we worked the system effectively as it was and didn't question the fact that maybe in the setup that was there that it was in some sense socially divided. These kind of sociological questions didn't suggest themselves to us at all, you know, we took them as a given.

It is apparent that the established social differences between social class origins of pupils up to 1967, continued on after the structural changes of that date. Vocational school teachers choose secondary

education for their own children. The overall picture is of agreed perceptions of the links between social, personal and schooling divisions at second level and little overt willingness to challenge the position. However, there is evidence also of contest and conflict around the allocation of social roles and the opportunities for mobility presented and prevented by the relationships and operation of the second-level school system.

Social Class, Sponsored and Contested

Waldron recounts his use of the examination papers to convince the principal employer in Belmullet in 1948, to alter his recruitment criteria in favour of graduates of the vocational school. The perception he had of the relative advantage of the certification provided by the Group Certificate was not universally held. McDwyer, had a different view that the examination might be a source of distraction to the more pragmatic purposes of the vocational school: *"... concerned with the younger age group and getting them thinking and giving them an attachment to the land and to the home... "*

> *I was in the Inspectorate when the Group Cert. was introduced, and believe it or not, we had grave reservations about introducing it. Why, you might ask. Because we did not want to have the vocational school programme run by examinations. And we finally, under pressure, agreed to an introduction of the Group Cert. with a lot of doubts and with a lot of safeguards, having different groups you see, domestic science group, manual instruction groups and commercial groups and so on, facing it in that way. The fear was that our schools would become exam orientated. In the context of the time, I would say that was a perfectly valid worry, - even later.*
>
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *Where did the pressure of the exams come from?*
> ***McDwyer***
>
> *Well, I would think parents, mostly, really.*
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *How did they voice their concerns at that time?*
> ***McDwyer***
>
> *It sort of built up. I think that the teachers' unions also felt that a move towards a definite examination system would upgrade the system in relation to the secondary school system."*

The issue of access to posts in the public service for VEC graduates became an issue very early on. In 1936 the matter was raised in a general way in the presidential address to the Irish Technical Association Congress in Drogheda.[162] In 1938, there was a resolution at the Congress in Cork that: *'The Civil Service Commissioners, the Department of Industry and Commerce, Local Government Department and other Departments of State concerned, also Local Authorities be requested to amend regulations and syllabuses of their several examinations for Clerical Posts, in such a manner as to offer a reasonable opportunity to students trained in the Commercial Classes under the control of*

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162 Speaking on ' The Relationship between Vocational Education and Primary and Secondary Education', Fr. McBranain (Galway), President, argued:*A definite value should be attached to the standard attained in our Vocational Schools so that employers of labour in industry and commerce should know the qualifications of students who had completed a two or three year course'.* ITEA Congress Report Congress, 1936, p39.

Vocational Committees to compete for and obtain these positions'[163]. In April 1941, teachers were talking about '*the apparent ostracism of qualified students of Vocational schools from appointments paid out of public monies...* ' and asserting: '*... The children of parents, who, either from lack of money or other sound reasons, do not go to Secondary Schools must not be victimised. If they have the necessary qualifications they are fully entitled to compete with Secondary School students on a equal footing.*'[164] In July 1943, the General Secretary of the Vocational Education Officers Organisation, (VEOO) wrote protesting that the recently appointed Central Bank of Ireland[165] had advertised for Junior male Clerkships and that the competition was to be confined to students who had passed the Leaving Certificate with honours and who had obtained honours in mathematics, thus conferring a monopoly on Secondary schools for such posts to the exclusion of other schools. A sense of social discrimination is expressed in a commentary on the letter when the editor of the teachers' bulletin reporting the matter concludes by asking: '*What is wrong with the students of Vocational Schools in the Eyes of the Central Bank Authorities? And what do the Directors think of the ban? Some of them can hardly agree with the ostracism of all talent except that bred in certain so-called select places.*'[166] A year later, the VEOO was decrying a proposal in the Irish Independent daily newspaper of 24th April, 1943, to have performance at the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate examinations used for filling clerical vacancies in the public sector but admitting students from other (i.e. vocational) schools to the examinations also. Such an arrangement would put those studying the secondary programme at a great advantage. The VEOO suggested that other assessments be utilised *('an independent examination for appointments')* to assess candidates, and that '*open competition must be truly open.*' In fighting language the editor of the bulletin declared: '*We want no "governing" or "official" caste formed by an educational system based on class snobbery'.*[167] By 1943, the need for an examination for the Continuation programme in vocational schools was becoming widely debated. In that year the national body of the VECs, the Irish Technical Education Association, (ITEA), established a sub-committee to make recommendations on the matter. [168] The debate at the sub-committee had a teacher representative making the case for examinations in terms of '*... the difficulties of students at the present time owing to the absence of a general certificate examination. In the competitive posts open to vocational school students the examinations are of both a qualifying and a competitive nature... The qualifying part of all such examinations should be covered by a school certificate and the competitive part could then be*

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183 The resolution in the name of Town of Tralee VEC was declared without debate. The Very Rev. Chairman said that '*..it made a most reasonable demand.*'. See ITEA Congress Report, 1938, p65-66.

164 The Vocational Education Bulletin, April 1941, p420. The Vocational Education Bulletin or An Iris um Oideachas Ghairme Bheata was the organ of the Vocational Education officers Organisation, (VEOO) and was published from May 1934 to 1952. National Library of Ireland, Dublin:IR 607.

165 The Central Bank was established in 1945, Lee, (1989), p287.

166 The Vocational Education Bulletin, July 1943, p572.

167 ibid. July 1944, p654.

168 The sub-committee met on 21/1/1944 and unanimously adopted a resolution that: '*..in view of the information conveyed to the meeting by the representatives of the Department that an enquiry was taking place as to the possibility of instituting a scheme of group examinations for day vocational schools, the question of any new or special examination scheme be adjourned for twelve months.*' Kerry VEC Archives, IVEA, 1940-1960. The sub-committee consisted of fifteen men, representing Committees (6), Dept. of Education Technical Instruction Branch, (3), CEOs (3), VEOO, (3). Intriguingly, examinations in the Technical Programmes did not have the same difficulty. They had been revised as early as 1935, because, in the view of the Technical Instruction Branch: *'experience has proved that it was defective as a means of testing actual technical attainment, and that it offered little attraction to students who had but limited time and facilities for attendance at Technical Schools, or to those who were anxious to obtain certified evidence of practical skill in trade subjects at an early stage in the course of their appointment. As a system it was academic rather than practical and was not framed with due regard to occupational requirements.' ITEA Report, 1935, p76.*

done simply by means of a interview.'[169] The Department Of Education inspectorate, as McDwyer has indicated, were not anxious to proceed too quickly: *'In the day schools developments are constantly taking place and it would be most inadvisable to introduce a rigid scheme of examinations at the present time as they would have the effect of petrifying the schools at their present stage of development.... He believed that an educational system should have standards but that the time was not yet opportune to decide what these standards should be in regard to the vocational schools.'*[170] In 1946, the Department of Education Technical Instruction Branch had a scheme prepared and the Chief Inspector explained particulars of the new examination to the Chief Executive Officers. *'It was explained that the scheme was devised to suit students of no marked literary ability, such as generally attended Day Vocational Schools...'* There is no evidence to suggest that the Chief Executive officers found anything to take exception to in this description of the vocational school students.[171] The examinations were introduced as the 'Group Certificate Examinations in 1947.[172]

Class as an Issue for Teachers

Interviews with Rooney and Dorney and with Lysaght have elicited observations about class related differences among the staff of vocational schools, on the one hand, and also on the relationship that existed between teachers and students in vocational schools. It becomes apparent from the extracts below that there were significant differences between teachers which related to their occupational origins and indeed to their earlier associations with the VEC institutions. Class tensions between teachers surfaced in the late 1960's when the reforms introduced secondary school programmes to vocational schools. The matter is obviously sensitive as evidenced by the request to go off record in making some comments to me. (Off the record comments are not included in the text. They have provided background data.) Dorney was recruited as a teacher in Dublin in 1967, the year of the introduction of the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate examinations into the VEC schools.

O'Reilly

Jim, prior to 1967 had you had any direct contact or indeed indirect contact with the VEC system?

Dorney

Absolutely none.

O'Reilly

Were you aware of its existence?

Dorney

I was aware of its existence but only in an abstract way because I came from a traditional middle class background. I went to a secondary school and I had the feeling that the vocational system was a sort of second class system, where I suppose persons who were less well endowed than I....

O'Reilly

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169 Minutes of ITEA sub-Committee, 21/1/1944, Contribution of Mr. J.A. McDonnell:Kerry VEC Archive, 1944.

170 ibid. Contribution of Mr. J.P Hackett, Senior Inspector, Dept. of Education., Technical Instruction Branch.

171 Memorandum on the Conference of Chief Executive Officers held at Colaiste Mhuire, Cathal Brugha Street, (Dublin), on 25th and 26th April 1946. In Kerry VEC Archives.

172 See Report of Dept. of Education, 1946/47, p31.

Was that experience common for a lot of people who came to the service?
Dorney

It was universal.
O'Reilly

Amongst the teachers recruited?
Dorney

In my opinion it was virtually universal. The point being that teachers are recruited from the middle classes. virtually exclusively. It's beginning to change now but not very much and the vocational system dealt with the working class people
O'Reilly

The teachers of trade subjects who were trained in an alternative -non graduates - framework would they have had the same social background or were they, in your experience... ?
Dorney

That's an interesting question, I'd have to think about that now. I think probably some because, you know, having a trade, was really the pinnacle for an awful lot of people, I think at that time. And whereas I would have been coming, the academic teacher... , - Let me put it this way: the academic teachers in the VEC system were from the upper middle class; the trade teachers were from the lower middle class. That would be my perspective.
O'Reilly

But they would have had experience of the vocational system?
Dorney

Turn that off there, for a minute. (Dorney's comments here are off the record)
O'Reilly

So the teachers then from the trade subjects would have had direct contact with the VEC system prior to their recruitment?
Dorney

Yes, of course they would. By definition.
O'Reilly

Would that have led them to have a different perspective then on the system?
Dorney

Yes I think so. And I think historically there has always been a great defensiveness on the part, particularly of teachers of trade subjects, about the system and about their particular section of it.
O'Reilly

To do with curriculum matters or organisational matters, do you think?
Dorney

I think it has been about, essentially curricular matters, essentially saying that their subject is important, which it is. Essentially saying that we have had a very academic education system in this county, far more so than any other European country. I believe it to be because the church controlled education to the extent that they did, and they saw education, in my view, as a device to recruit priests and nuns. That is why it was so academic. These people came from a different tradition which was denigrated. It wouldn't have been so in Germany, it wouldn't have been so in the UK, but it was so here.

As well as making a link between teacher reactions to curricular reform and social class origins, there is an ambivalence detectable in the extract.

There is a certain amount of ambiguity in Dorney's mildly critical observation of 'teachers of trade subjects' as being overly defensive at the same time as expressing his criticism of Irish education

generally for being overly academic. The division between subject areas and class of origin, is however, clear.

Rooney, in the following extract, addresses the same period of transition from the Group Certificate to the introduction of the Intermediate and Leaving Certificates to Vocational schools in the late sixties and early seventies. Again there is a strong sense conveyed of an internal tension about basic mission and affiliation of the vocational school evident in the observations. A material basis for the tension is also identified in the question of graduate allowances, payable in addition to a common basic teachers' salary, and scale introduced in 1969.[173]

> ***Rooney***
> *Up to the time of the Ryan report, I suppose, you would have been talking about a teaching profession that was more than 50%, if you like, practical teachers, to use that term, I think it was something up around 60% like in the mid'60s.*[174] *So you were stepping on the doorstep now of a major transition and I suppose looking back on it now the Ryan report must have foreseen some of that. I don't know whether it did or not, but certainly it did have a profound bearing on what happened afterwards. Now the practical teachers felt totally and absolutely alienated by the Ryan report - they were viciously hostile. Huge numbers of practical teachers left the VTA (Vocational Teachers Association) and never came back.*
> ***O'Reilly***
> *In that it didn't recognise their status, their value?*
> ***Rooney***
> *No, it just failed completely and, I suppose, I mean I met fellows in the staffroom who were graduates who felt that it was correct, that Ryan was right. It took them 3-4 years to get their degree and they were entitled to it. Of course they got an increment as well, but there was no objection to the increment. There was an increment you see for length of training; the practical teachers had no problem with that. The view was you see that what constituted a qualification for teaching and the practical teacher felt that you shouldn't be paid any more for being barely qualified - a degree meant you were barely qualified, our diploma meant we were barely qualified. Now as you know they introduced all sort of devices afterwards to try to trickle people through the net you know. People like me, I was never without the allowance, I always had it, because I had the Advanced Technological Exams which were taken as equivalents...*

Having established a material dimension to the differences between graduate teachers and 'practical teachers', Rooney goes on to recount the existence of other attitudes which materially affected the evolution of the vocational school. In the process, a strong sense of identity with the vocational tradition is articulated:

> *I'll tell you it's a very different system now than it was then, that's for sure. I remember when we went to Moneenageesha (Voc. Sch. Galway City), first in 1969/70 to open it up and the Leaving Cert. was starting to come in you know, about 1970, and I remember the ferocious arguments at staff meetings between practical teachers and graduates about how to treat*

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173 A common basic salary scale was introduced in 1969 following publication of: The Tribunal on Teachers Salaries, *Report presented to the Minister for Education.* Dublin:Stationery Office, 1969, (prl.87), known as the Ryan Tribunal Report. The report recommended a common basic salary for all teachers based on a two-year teacher-education programme. Additional salary increments and allowances were available to graduates for longer degree and post-graduate studies. See Report, p10.

174 Data on teachers employed by the VECs in 1961/62 is presented in *Investment in Education Report,* Vol.1, Table 4.7 ,p67, and in Vol.2, Appendix IVc, p195-225. From this data I have calculated that non-graduate teachers of Woodwork, Construction, Metalwork & Engineering, Domestic Science and Art constituted 44.2% of whole-time teachers employed by VECs. As a proportion of Rural Science and Irish teachers were also non-graduates, Rooney's figure of 50% is about accurate. Sixty percent is probably an overestimate.

these new subjects that were coming in and there was alot of 'agro' now. I certainly was, I was say I was very hostile at the time, to some of the concepts. For example all of the graduates were saying at the time: 'We're in favour of streaming off a kind of a higher stream for this Leaving Cert.'. That was coming in, and fellows like me were going into orbit over it you know: this thing was totally alien and we were very against it.

O'Reilly

That there shouldn't be a streaming?

Rooney

No we didn't feel at the time that the Leaving Cert. deserved any greater recognition that what we were already doing. Because you see at the time, you had to remember, in those days, our students were remarkably successful in the employment world. They were all walking into jobs. Our problem in those days was keeping kids in classrooms, because the employers would come in and take them out on us. If they found out about a good one - he was gone on us and good students we were encouraging to go on, we had great difficulty in holding on to them. We just couldn't hold them because employers were offering them incentives to take jobs. So at the time it made no sense to us because people like me felt we were doing what we were very good at. We were training young people for the world of employment and were providing for their 'after training' through our nightclasses because it was compulsory in those days to teach at night. All of us taught at night at well. So the kids you had been teaching during the dayclass up to Group Cert. We would have them subsequently at night as apprentices.

O'Reilly

The same students?

Rooney

The same students. We were continuing on with them. Now we were getting them ready for senior trades and junior trades and we probably had them for a Math's class. And so we felt very strongly, that this was the way to go.

In the same passage, Rooney links his understanding of the tensions in 1960's and early 1970's with the subsequent development of the vocational school as part of the general secondary school system and the development of the Regional Technical Colleges, (RTCs).

O'Reilly

Was that, you say, in a large urban setting like Galway? Would that have been typical do you think or was it?

Rooney

It was Galway yes. Oh in the larger towns, very much so. Any town where there was a fairly stable vocational school. There was a strong tradition there... I think our colleges would be today the further education colleges if we had stuck with the purely vocational. Now its very easy now to be smart because in those days we didn't know all this Euro money was coming either and we didn't know that vocational education was going to become so respectable, which it is now.... When we were teaching on Moneenageesha (Voc. Sch. Galway City), in 1970, we had the impression that we were going to have a kind of a "Technical Leaving Cert." that we could be doing. Then we all got frightened you see because the RTC was going up and said, 'Now, we're going to loose all our students to the RTC you see because they will be going up there to do the Leaving Cert.'. That was the division at the time. And in one or two places it actually happened. But it never happened in Galway ever. We never actually lost students up to Galway RTC. But the concept was: Right, OK, we would have a Leaving Cert. designed for our students that we would take our students through but...

O'Reilly

It became part of the second level general system?

Rooney

Well you see what we did then, well I know, certainly in Moneenageesha (Voc. Sch. Galway City), - strongly influenced, now, by a guy who has since become Principal of the school, a very good friend of mine now in those days, very a kind of a very academic...-we started to copy, if you will, to ape what the secondary schools were doing in the city and had been doing for a 100 years. There were people on our staff, and I couldn't believe it, people on our staff actually believed that we could copy what they were doing, be as good as them at it, become

actually believed that we could copy what they were doing, be as good as them at it, become respectable over night, offering this academic Leaving Cert. That was never on, absolutely a non-starter. People would not listen. And in order to do that they were even suggesting this streaming thing, that we stream off a dozen or so of our top students, reduce the amount of practical time and add in more time for honours English, honours Irish, honours Maths and build up this thing. Now I mean that was a non-starter anyway because you were never going to draw enough of those students to make it viable.

The passage conveys well the sense of loyalty (to '*our students*') with strong class overtones, and the tensions within the vocational school system in this period of transition. Central to this loyalty was the role of the 'practical teachers' and the identification between them and their students, which has a social class dimension.

We have seen how the evolution of the vocational school was a site of tension. Breen, (1986: 46) reports the subject provision of Secondary Schools and Vocational schools in 1981/82, which gives an indication of the outcome of the tension in the area of curricular provision

Table 9.1

Mean number of Leaving Certificate subjects in each Curriculum Area according to School Type.

	Subject Areas				
	Science	Commerce	Technical	Languages	All Subjects
Secondary	3.6	2.2	0.3	1.8	11.4
Vocational	1.9	1.3	2.6	0.9	9.6
Comm.&Comp.	4.1	2.3	3.0	1.5	15.3

From Breen, (1986), Table 12.13, p46.

The technical concentration in the vocational school continued. It is apparent that by 1981-2 that the relative emphasis on technical studies continued to be a distinguishing feature of the vocational school in comparison with secondary schools .[175] Vocational schools have the greatest concentration on technical subjects, in the sense that they devote the largest share of their curriculum to these subjects. In other areas of the curriculum, vocational schools teach fewer subjects than either of the other two school types.[176]

In the words of Breen, the position in early 1980's was:

> *Put bluntly... working class subjects are taken by working class pupils, in the sense that subjects which orient towards manual work (Technical Drawing and probably also Engineering Workshop and Building Construction) are almost exclusively taken by male working class pupils. Similarly, Home Economics, which is linked to the female/homemaker role, is taken mainly by female working class pupils.* [177]

Maximally Maintained Inequality: the Role of the Vocational School

Raftery and Hout (1993) have argued that the expansion and the reform in Irish education had the effect of maximally maintaining social inequality. They contend that although the average student has received far more education in the second half of the twentieth century than the average student fifty years ago, the young person who left school at age 18 in 1975 passed through a parallel sequence of educational gateways as did her counterpart who left school in the 1930's.[178] High levels of absolute mobility were accompanied with minimum relative mobility. This analysis is confirmed by

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175 The table shows an average of three technical subject in Community & Comprehensive schools, higher than the vocational school average. This is attributable to the relative small size of many vocational schools. See Breen (1986), op.cit p46.

176 For further discussion and data on subject differentials in Irish second-level schools, see Lynch, (1989), p57-8.

177 Brine (1986), p55. This conclusion is made controlling for school type. Its significance in this discussion is the identification of 'working class subjects'. Breen argues, (p85-6) that there seems to be no evidence that attendance at one type of a school rather than another has a marked influence on senior cycle performance, (i.e. Leaving Certificate performance), but that attendance at a Vocational school leads to a lower level of job aspiration than does attendance at a secondary school. Greaney & Kelleghan (1984: 256), report that *'..if initial differences between students on the primary school measures are taken into account, the performance of students in the two types of school were not significantly different from each other, with the exception of (Intermediate Examination) Mathematics, on which examination secondary-school students performed better'.*

178 Raftery, A.E., & Hout, M., 'Maximally Maintained Inequality: Expansion, Reform and Opportunity in Irish Education, 1921-75', in Sociology of Education, 1993, Vol.66, (January); 41-62.

Hout'(1989), Lynch (1989), Whelan and Whelan (1984, Breen and Whelan (1992, Breen et al. (1990) and Clancy (1995a), and Clancy (1995b).[179] Together they constitute '*... strong evidence that the transformation of the Irish educational system has had little impact on the level of social fluidity in the society'.*[180] The explanatory models used span the theoretical /ideological spectrum but in all cases the analysis is presented in terms of barriers, transitions, survival and further transition as the pattern to be traced. The relationship between educational credentials and occupational/social opportunities changes in Ireland, slowly over the period 1930 to 1960, and rapidly thereafter. The range of credentials was differentiated by occupational destination and institutional provision. In other words, vocational schools were primarily associated with making provision for manual and skilled manual employments, and their certification reflected this. In providing credentials for access to service employment, VEC school credentials (Group Cert.) were forced to assert and to contest, but and were at a disadvantage in terms of status in comparison with general secondary credentials. School provision in vocational schools presented lower transition barriers and varying cost/benefit balances to families and students, depending on the location, occupation and status. In absolute terms, the vocational school, 1930 to 1960, presented lower direct cost barriers, (tuition, travel, etc.) and relatively lower opportunity costs. Until 1947, the vocational school provided no marketable educational credential for its mainstream course, the Continuation programme. Emphasis was placed on the use value as opposed to the exchange value of the vocational school curriculum.[181] Changing cost benefit ratios resulted from the 1967 reforms. The abolition of secondary school fees and the introduction of a school transport scheme, together with the rapid provision of additional places, lowered the relative cost of secondary schooling. The continuation of the Group Certificate examination until 1989, and the weighting of technical ('practical') subjects in the curriculum, meant that the vocational school portfolio of certification continued to be associated with the manual and skilled manual occupations. This association supported the continuing perception of the social and occupational focus of the vocational school. Clancy (1995a) has shown how vocational school retention rates continued to differ systematically in the period 1975 to 1994. Figure 9.6 illustrates the relative strength of retention to Leaving Certificate examination in vocational, secondary and community/comprehensive schools of the first year cohorts for 1975/76, 1981/82 and 1987/88.[182]

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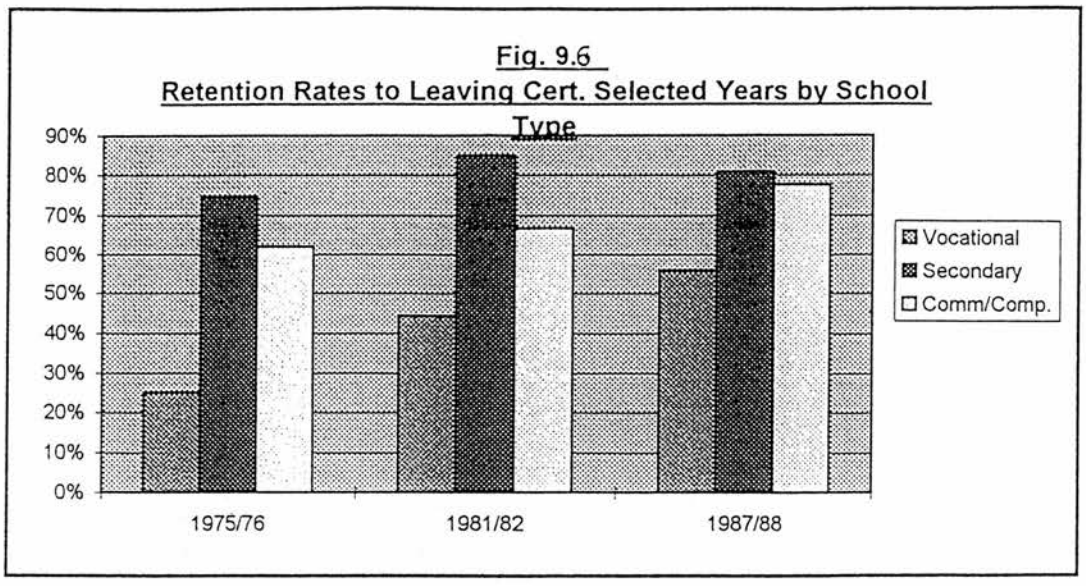
179 Hout, M., (1989) Following in Father's Footsteps: Social Mobility in Ireland, Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard Univ. Press; Lynch, K., (1989) The Hidden Curriculum: Reproduction in Education- a Reappraisal, London:Flamer Press; Brine, R., and Whelan, CT, (1992),' Explaining the Irish Pattern of Social Fluidity: The Role of the Political, in Goldthorpe and Whelan, (eds.), p129-152. Breen, R., Hannon, D.M., Rottman, D.B., and Whelan, C.T., (1990), 'Education: The promise of Reform and the Growth of Credentialism', in 'Understanding Contemporary Ireland: State, Class and Development in the Republic of Ireland, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, Ch.6., p123-142., Clancy, P,(1995a),'Education in the Republic of Ireland: the Project of Modernity.' In Clancy, P, Drudy S., Lynch, K., & O'Dowd, L., Irish Society: Sociological Perspectives, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, Clancy, P (1995b) 'Access to College: Patterns of Continuity and Change., Dublin: Higher Education Authority.

180 Breen and Whelan, (1992), p231.

181 See McDwyer above. The concepts are modifications of those in Dore (1976), '*self-regarding achievement learning*' and ' *self-regarding qualification-seeking learning*'. See Dore, R., (1976) The Diploma Disease: Education, Qualification and Development', London: George Allen & Unwin, p138. Qualifications and curricular forms which (in the perceptions of the participants) have value predominantly in the way they prepare learners explicitly for work or adult life, can be characterised as having 'use value'. Those that carry value mainly because they constitute a gateway to further study, work or status rather than for any explicit use, are characterised by having 'exchange value'. For an illuminating recent study see Saunders, M and Sambili, H.,' Can Vocational Programmes Change Use and Exchange Value Attributions of School Leavers:A Kenyan case study In Educational Review, Vol. 47, No. 3, 1995, p319-331.

182 Clancy (1995a), Table 26, p82. The latter group presented for Leaving Certificate in 1993. The 1975/76 and 81/82 figures include students who repeated the examination in those years



Source: Constructed by the author from Clancy (1995a), Table 26, p82.

While retention rates improve in all school types and vocational schools do succeed in reducing the gap between secondary school and vocational school retention rates from 49.6% of a gap to 25%, the relative positions remain fundamentally unaltered. Re-examining data in Greaney and Kelleghan (1984) relating to 1967 transitions, Hout and Raftery, (1985) report that for a particular case, type of school explains more of the deviance in dropout rates at second level than 'father's occupation' and 'ability' combined. Controlling for class and ability, they report a 9% probability of dropping out of school from a secondary and 26% probability for the same student dropping out from a vocational school.[183]

It is apparent that barriers to survival are significantly higher for the vocational school students than for those from the same social class that choose the secondary school. School choice discriminates between students on the basis of occupational and social aspirations and social capital. The VEC system has operated for a long period as a strongly class-related provision, with lower access barriers but offering credentials with reduced exchange value. The balance of student and staff populations has meant that it has continued to be perceived to be a site of less social capital and so to yield less in terms of social return to those most aware of the significance of social capital.[184]

The Irish phenomenon is not unique. Examining education and occupational attainment in 21 countries, Treiman and Yip (1988) identify *'differential access to human capital as the driving force in social*

183 Hout and Raftery, (1985), 'Does Irish Education approach the Meritocratic Ideal? A Logistical Analysis.' In The Economic and Social Review, Vol.16, No.2, January 1985, p115-140.

184 James Coleman defined social capital as 'the norms, the social networks and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up From Coleman, J.S. (1990) Equality and Achievement in Education, Boulder:Westview Press, p325. For his most extended discussion of this topic see Coleman, J. (1994) Foundations of Social Theory, Cambridge, Mass.:Harvard University Press, p Ch.12, p300-324. 'Social capital... is created when the relations among persons change in ways that facilitate action', p304. 'Social capital is the value of those aspects of social structure to actors, as resources that can be used by actors to realise their interests', p305.

stratification'[185]. For Mueller and Karle (1990), the crucial factor for producing differences in social selectivity, as between countries, is the distribution of educational credentials that the supply of education by the education institutions entails in different countries. The historical development of educational institutions in European countries is significantly different but to a great extent they continue, past their twentieth century expansions and reforms, to mirror their beginnings. In all countries, social selection in the school system is a cumulative process. At a number of transition points, students drop out in a socially selective way. Countries differ in the arrangements they have put in place for the distribution of educational credentials of various levels to different social classes. Different education systems provide different opportunities to survive through the system[186]

In 1984, Greaney and Kellaghan, reporting on a longitudinal study of students who transferred to second-level schooling in 1967, the year in which the reforms of the vocational schools were initiated, opined that:

> *To the extent that the type of post-primary school which a student attended limited his or her prospects of staying in the system or of obtaining the qualifications conferred by the system, the traditional structure of post-primary education in Ireland must be regarded as an institutional constraint on the realisation of equality of participation and achievement.*[187]

They proceed in an optimistic tone to suggest that the on-going broadening of curricula in both vocational and secondary schools and the increased total enrollment in post-primary schools, would have '*... a mitigating effect on that constraint*'. Nonetheless, Clancy in 1995 was arguing that while it was clear that the differential in performance in various types of school is attributable to differentials in pupil characteristics at intake, that the social class composition of schools has a significant effect on student aspiration and achievement and, '*...The institutionalisation, within a system of publicly-funded education, of invidious status hierarchies between different post-primary schools serves to reproduce existing hierarchies.*'[188] Hout and Raftery, (1993: 60-61) point out that to try to retract class advantage as a basis for selection in a system that remains highly selective, is likely to rankle too many entrenched interests. The 1960's reforms of Irish education did not threaten existing interests and were accompanied by little conflict.

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185 Treiman, D.J., and Yip, K.B., (1988), ' Educational and Occupational Attainment in 21 Countries' in Kohn, M.L., Cross-National Research in Sociology, London: Sage, p373-394. See p393.

186 See Mueller, W and Karle, W., 'Social Selection in Educational Systems in Europe' paper prepared for the ISA Research Committee Social Stratification, XIIth World Congress of Sociology, Madrid, July 9-13, 1990.

187 Greaney, V. & Kellaghan, T., (1984) Equality of Opportunity in Irish Schools, A longitudinal study of 500 students. The Educational Company:Dublin, p256.

188 Clancy, P, (1995), 'Education in the Republic of Ireland: the Project of Modernity.' In Clancy,P, Drudy, S., Lynch, K., & O'Dowd, L., Irish Society: Sociological Perspectives, Dublin:Institute of Public Administration, p467-494 (p490).

The politics of an across the board increase in access to education is easier to implement than a re-ordering of the selection criteria.

In the meantime, vocational schools continue their dual role of confirming and contesting the processes of social selection inherent in the Irish education system.

PART 5

THE POLITICS OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN IRISH EDUCATION

THE CASE OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEES

Introduction

In Part 5 of this study, Chapters 10-12 address the policy making process of education in Ireland around the establishment of the VEC system in 1930 through its development to 1990. In Part 4 (Chapters 7-9), the functioning of the VEC system in relation to the economy and the social system have been examined. In Part 5, the politics of education and the educational politics of the VEC are the focus. If, as Dale suggests, the politics of education is fundamentally the process and structures through which macro-societal expectations of education as an institution are identified and interpreted and constituted as an agenda for the education system,[1] then those Chapters attempt to delineate those processes and structures as they are apparent in the establishment and development of the VEC system. The following Chapters are "stories of policy-making"[2] which illuminate specific assumptions about purpose, legitimacy, power, and decision making process.[3] The stories are presented around specific decision-making events in which education institutional change was effected in some cases, and in others, avoided. To the maximum extent possible, the accounts and the words of the policy-makers are presented to reveal the cognitive maps and "assumptive worlds," of the "policy community" as they present the policy-making processes at specific points around the establishment and development of the VEC system. The stories presented will attempt as far as possible to identify and locate the policy actors, or members of the policy community, and to clarify the extent to which personal value systems and "entrepreneurial" dispositions among key actors in the policy community are required to explain change or the lack of it.

The "stories" presented in these Chapters also present evidence for a descriptive characterisation of the Irish Education system. As outlined in Chapter 2, the key terms of this characterisation are drawn from Archer (1971, 1973, 1979, and 1981) and from Ringer (1979 and 1988) with Muller (1987).

The following Chapters will present a state system incompletely constituted or still emergent. Segmentation and systematisation processes are both evident throughout the period of the study and competitive conflict a consistent characteristic. It is argued that the evidence of the following

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1 Dale (1994), p3.
2 See Marshall et.al. (1989) p52.
3 See Marshall et.al. (1989) p35. Also Chapter 2 above.

Chapters supports the view that the VEC system is most appropriately understood as a limited form of state assertion by a newly formed state with concerns about its general legitimacy and operating in education in the face of the dominance of churches in a virtually mono-integrated provision.[4] The accounts presented allow assessment of the extent to which the VEC system was the carrier for a set of educational roles for the state in a context where these roles were contested. The accounts of decision-making given illustrate the contest in the ideological arena, in the matter of physical assets and in relation to key personnel, as well as in decision-making structures. The accounts in the following Chapters do not claim to constitute a summary history of the politics of the VEC system. No claim is made to a complete treatment of any particular decision nor of any particular period. The accounts presented together allow for an overview, from which the theses presented may be evaluated. In Part 3 (Chapters 4-6), the demographic, economic and the politico-cultural contexts for the decisions presented here have been outlined. In part 4 (Chapters 7-9), the growth of the system and its economic an social roles have been examined In this section of the study we present instances of those policy making processes by which irish society created and moulded its Vocational Education committee system. This section of the study will attempt to answer the questions posed in Chapter 1: 'In what ways was the establishment and subsequent development of the VEC system linked to the larger society and what were the linkages? What were the relationships of the VEC system to the other elements of Irish education- the primary and the secondary systems? In what ways did these relationships change and what models can be used to adequately understand these changes?'

4 Archer(1979)

CHAPTER 10

EDUCATION AND THE FORMATION OF THE NATION STATE

THE BIRTH OF THE VEC SYSTEM AND THE POLITICS OF THE STATE FORMATION 1899-1942.

> *State formation refers to the process by which the modern state is constructed.... Includes the construction of the political and administrative apparatus but also the formation of ideologies and collective beliefs which legitimate state power and underpin concepts of nationhood and national character.*[5]

Introduction

This Chapter presents material that spans the period 1898 to 1942. In 1899, the establishment of a system of Technical Instruction Committees provided the structural precedent in Irish education from which the VEC system was to take some of its key characteristics. In the years 1940-42, (with the publication of a revised charter for VEC's), a major public assault on the legitimacy of the VEC system prompted a response designed to neutralise the conflict, known as Memorandum V.40.

This Chapter presents the evidence on which the following assertions may be evaluated:

- The Irish State established in 1922 was unable to assert general public control of the system of education through organs of government. Larger questions of state formation in an emergent state and the generation of political support through linguistic, religious and economic mobilisation subordinated educational assertion to more basic needs.
- The establishment of the VEC system is to be seen as an assertion by state managers in education made possible by its focus on the economic functions of education provision.
- The competitive interaction of Church and State claims in the Irish education system in these formative years were resolved in favour of Church claims.
- The resultant dynamic led to simultaneous segmentation (the development of vocational system with separate curricula, student population and set of institutions) and systematisation, the establishment of a central state Minister and Department of Education with legal powers in respect of curriculum, funding and the registration of school institutions.

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5 Green, A. (1990). Education and State Formation. London: Routledge, p77.

- The transitions and the continuities in elite groups in Irish politics before and after the founding of the state is reflected in the politics of Vocational education.

The data presented in this Chapter is drawn from archive material, published sources and from the interviews conducted for this study. Some of the material is being presented for the first time.

Vocational Education and the Birth of the State

The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899 has been interpreted as an act of 'Constructive Unionism' on the part of Irish and British Unionists or 'killing Home Rule with kindness.'[6] A Unionist politician and member of the landlord class, Sir Horace Plunkett, used his considerable personal resources, organisational ability and political affiliation with the governing Tory administration to fashion governmental approval and general acceptance of the proposals.[7] Plunkett was a Meath landlord, a Protestant, and a Unionist MP for South Dublin. During the parliamentary recesses of 1895 and 1896, he succeeded in getting a large gathering of MP's and business people, Unionist and Nationalist, Catholic and Protestant, to convene in what was termed 'The Recess Committee.' The membership included John Redmond, the moderate Nationalist MP, as well as Liberal and Tory Unionists; Fr. Finlay, SJ, of the Royal University and Rev. Dr. Kane, Grand Master of the Orange Lodge; the Mayor of Dublin and a number of prominent Belfast businessmen. The plan was that (to quote Plunkett's letter of invitation), *'we unionists, without abating one jot of our unionism, and nationalists, without abating one jot of their nationalism, can each show our faith in the cause for which we have fought so bitterly and so long, by sinking our party differences for our country's good...* [8] By their united front, moderate unionists and moderate nationalists persuaded the Tory government to provide a type of economic development legislation in which technical education was to play a central role[9]. The measure was opposed by more radical nationalists for whom it was a placatory gesture with some potential to undermine support for Home Rule.[10]

The Act provided for the establishment of Technical Instruction Committees with fund-raising powers by local authorities, for a Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, for a representative, advisory Board of Technical Instruction, and for a Consultative Committee on Education which it would share with the Boards for Secondary and National Education.[11] In 1902, the first local Technical Instruction Committees representatives, meeting in Cork under the aegis the Department, established the Irish Technical Instruction Association.[12] These governance arrangements provided

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6 The term 'constructive unionism' is used by Lyons (1973) in respect of this and other initiatives of the period; e.g. The Land Acts of 1881, 1885, 1891 & 1903 and the establishment of the Congested District Boards-1890. See p202.

7 For an account of Plunkett's background and contribution to economic development and technical education, see Byrne, (1982), opcit, pp210-221, and Lyons (1973), pp206ff.

8 Byrne, (1982), p215, Note 107.

9 See Chapter 7II for the extent to which concern for vocational education in Ireland was related to similar movements in Britain as opposed to being a purely autonomous irish phenomenon.

10 ibid. p119,266-7. This group had their party origins in the split following Parnell's divorce and were more closely identified with Catholicism, Lyons (1973), p196-201.

11 Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, 60&63 Vict., Ch.20., Sections 10, 14, and 23.

12 Irish Technical Instruction Association Congress, 1902.

multiple integration for the new service, with Parliament, the civil service, with other national education services and with the local providers of technical education. It also opened the system to the tensions of the larger society and their political manifestations.

A Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction was established with Plunkett as Vice-President or Minister in charge of the Department and accountable directly to Parliament for its operation.[13] This first phase of vocational education was one of increased political tensions on the island. In 1907, Plunkett's (unionist) vision of an Ireland for the new century came into conflict with the strengthening nationalist sensibilities of his Roman Catholic compatriots.[14] Nationalist pressure led to an enquiry in the conduct of DATI, (Dept. of Agriculture and Technical Instruction) in 1906-7 after Liberals, friendly to the Nationalist Party and not particularly indebted to Plunkett, took office after the 1905 Westminster election.[15] The definition of technical education was presented by a nationalist spokesman to the Inquiry as a conspiratorial restriction on appropriate training for Irish youth. Another issue was the appointment of 'aliens,' i.e. Englishmen, to positions in the new service.[16] The inquiry generated heat and political tension and drew the Technical Instruction Committee system into the cultural and political divisions of the day. It led to no significant change other than an awareness at all levels of the Technical Instruction system of its entanglements with the politics of the national question. At committee level, the three sided political contests were between members of the nationalist (Redmond's) party, and more radical nationalists and unionists (both Catholic and Protestant) and various shades within each of these groups. Over the years 1907 to 1923, there were many turbulent exchanges at committee level, particularly about the appointment of the Principal/Secretary to the scheme or about the appointment of teachers. A recurring issue was the commitment or otherwise of candidates to 'Irish Ireland.'[17] The Tralee Minutes recorded discord over

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13 Clune (1980), p36.

14 The following extract from the First Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction outlines Plunkett's vision: *'... a proper system of education which while paying due heed to the training of character and the will, will train the intelligence to deal with concrete things as well as with ideas, and which will give the generations receiving it skill and knowledge that will bring out and make them conscious of their own powers and resources in practical affairs... it is to the individual and rational resourcefulness and the confident character thus developed by an educational system, more than to any other cause, that countries which have in recent times achieved marked industrial success owe their progress.'* DATI First Annual Report, 1900-1901. p21. In 1904, Plunkett's book 'Ireland in the New Century' generated considerable hostility among Catholic Church and nationalist leaders for the unflattering portrayal of both nationalist politicians and catholic church leaders. He accused the Catholic church leaders of diverting funds into church building away from economic and social development (p107); he accused nationalist politicians of *'lack of initiative and shrinking from responsibility.. (and) moral timidity...'* (p80). On these mild and not unfounded criticisms, enormous animosity was generated and an opportunity sought to chastise their author. (For the case on church use of capital investment see 'Economic Growth, Capital Investment and the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland' in Larkin, E. (1997) The Historical Dimensions of Irish Catholicism, Dublin & Washington: Catholic Univ. of America Press and Four Courts Press) For an account of the inquiry see Clune, M. (1980) 'The Inquiry into the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and Horace Plunkett's Resignation as Vice-President, 1906-1907.' In Coolahan, J. (eds.), Proceedings of ESAI Conference, Limerick, 1980, Dublin: Educational Studies Association of Ireland, pp26-36.

15 See Clune (1980). See Byrne (1982) pp270-277.

16 See Byrne (1982) p294. A minority report in the name of Mr. Micks presents the harshest criticisms from the nationalist perspectives. Re appointments, see Lee, J. (1973), The Modernisation of Irish Society, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, p128, notes that the Local Government Act of 1898, did not provide for competitive entrance examinations and 'became the first major example of the potential conflict between political and social modernisation, for the new system soon became as big a byword as the old for corruption.' The 1899 Act extended this dilemma.

17 Kennedy B.A., (1981). The Origin and Development of Voc. Education in Meath. A Case Study. Unpublished M. Eds. thesis, UCD p63-68. 17 See also, for example, the obituary for Mr. Sean Lane, CEO, Waterford (City) VEC in the July, 1940 edition of 'The Vocational Education Bulletin,' p364. The obituary approvingly records that *'an ardent supporter of Sinn Fein, Mr. Lane was prominently identified with the National Movement and interned by the British in 1921. While interned, the Waterford VEC paid the*

the provision of training facilities for British army personnel in the local barracks.[18] Byrne reports a series of similar incidents in Cork and Clare whereas in Limerick, Galway, Belfast and Londonderry the military were accommodated with technical instruction classes in the same period.[19] The ITIA annual congress appears to have been able to accommodate the full spectrum of these views during those years, not without tension, but with good mannered restraint, most of the time. At the 1917 wartime congress in Dublin, a moving set of condolences were exchanged between members and officials who had lost sons in the trenches. Fletcher, the Assistant Secretary lost his two sons in one week. Committee minutes also record votes of sympathy with officials and with local people on war deaths.[20]

After the general election of 1918, M.P.s elected for Sinn Fein in that election refused to take their seats in Westminster and set up an alternative 'Government of the Irish Republic' operating from an assembly known as 'Dail Eireann.'[21] Sinn Fein and the Gaelic League had both identified education as a central element in the 'overall design for national regeneration.'[22] Between January and November 1919 no initiative was taken to establish a counter education ministry or Department other than an assertion in the Democratic Programme of the first Dail that '*the first duty of the Government of the Republic would be to provide all children with the means and facilities requisite for their proper education and training as Citizens of a Free and Gaelic Ireland.*'[23] Records of the events have a member of the Cabinet responding to questions on the establishment of an education ministry by indicating '*that President de Valera had some definite reason for not appointing a Minister for Education....*' But that '*Education is being taken care of but that Department is not ready yet. Nobody need have any fear that we will not take care of Education...*'[24] The most common interpretation of these exchanges is that Sinn Fein decided that it would lose Catholic support if the Dail sought to establish a major claim in the area of education at that particular juncture.[25] The critical influence in that context was the Education (Ireland) Bill controversy that raged during 1919 and 1920.

(MacPherson) Education (Ireland) Bill 1919[26]

The controversy engendered by this Bill continues to influence contemporary debate.[27] In the words of a recent historian: '*... the 'partitioned' nature of education in Ireland laid bare in 1919, can be*

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highest tribute in their power to his ability, by appointing him as principal.... He later took up arms with the Republican forces and again saw service and was interned until 1923.'

18 Minutes of Tralee Technical Instruction Committee, September, 1919.

19 Byrne (1982) p405-408.

20 Minutes of Tralee Technical Instruction Committee February, 1917.

21 See Mitchell, A. (1995) Revolutionary Government in Ireland, Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, esp Ch.1 The Establishment of Dail Eireann, p5-42.

22 O'Buachalla, S. (1977) ' Education as an Issue in the First and Second Dail' in Administration, Vol.25, No.1, p57-75.

23 Dail Eireann; Minutes of Proceedings of the First Parliament of the Republic of Ireland. p162-3 as cited by Titley (1983) p78, see also Mitchell (1995) p93 and O'Buachalla (1977) p63.

24 Quoted in O'Buachalla, 1977, p63.

25 Mitchell (1995) p93.

26 Education (Ireland) Bill. No.214, 9 &10 Geo.5. Introduced by Mr. Ian MacPherson, Chief Secretary for Ireland on 24 November, 1919.

27 See Hyland, A., (1991) 'Education Bills - 1919 and 1992' in Irish Education Decision-Maker, Summer, 1991, p2-6.

said to have anticipated and, through its deeply rooted antecedents, to have contributed to the political partitioning of the country which was being prepared at the same time...[28] Two commissions (one on primary and one on secondary or intermediate education) established by the Chief Secretary, Ian MacPherson, had presented their reports by March 1919,[29] and their principal recommendations were incorporated into the Bill published in November, 1919. The Bill proposed to establish a Department of Education for Ireland with a representative advisory board and to establish Local Education Committees. The proposed Department would incorporate the existing Boards of National and Intermediate Education, as well as the Technical Instruction Board of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. Secondly, the Bill proposed local education authorities, supported like Technical Instruction Committees by a local rate. The proposed powers for local education committees included: the striking of an education rate, the provision of the local contribution towards the building and improving of schools, the provision of school meals, the provision for maintaining, repairing, cleansing, heating furnishing, and equipping national schools and school transport. The local committees were also given responsibility for enforcing the school attendance legislation and significantly, powers to assist in the establishment and maintenance of evening continuation schools.[30] The commissions on whose reports the Bill was based had included representatives of the churches and of the teachers and of school managements. The expected support did not materialise. The Bill followed on the 1918 'Fisher' Education Act and the earlier 1902 Education Act in England and Wales. Introducing the 1902 Bill in the Commons, Balfour had argued:

> *We are agreed about secular education. We are not agreed about religious education. We have as a community repudiated responsibility for teaching a particular form of religion...As we have left to parents the responsibility for choosing what religion their children are to learn, surely we ought... to make our system as elastic as we can in order to meet their wishes.*[31]

Here were assertions of the role of the state in education with which the Irish Catholic bishops had conducted an almost continuous crusade throughout the nineteenth century. By 1870, what had been designed as a non-denominational primary education system had been, in the course of the century, '*moulded and modified to the almost total satisfaction of the church.*'[32] The MacPherson Bill had come at the end of a series of British administration initiatives, which were in conflict with the position of the Irish Catholic Church.[33] Change to the de facto denominational system of management had been argued against on an amalgam of religious, political and educational grounds over a period of thirty years.[34]

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28 Farren, (1995), p33.

29 Report of vice-regal committee of inquiry into primary education (Ireland) 1918 (Cmd. 60) XXI, 741 and Report of the vice-regal committee on the conditions of service and remuneration of teachers in intermediate schools and on the distribution of grants from public funds for intermediate education in Ireland, 1919. (Cmd. 66) XXI, 645 known as the Kilanin and the Maloney reports respectively.

30 Sections 10-14, Education (Ireland) Bill, 1919.

31 Speech by Mr. A.J. Balfour, Prime Minister, introducing the Education Bill, 1902, House of Commons, March, 24, 1902. From Maclure (1986), p152.

32 O'Buachalla, (1988), p207-8.

33 A central co-ordinating education authority in conjunction with local democratic education bodies had been unsuccessfully proposed in legislation in 1904 (Wyhdhan Bill), and in the 1907 Irish Council Bill. See O'Buachalla, (1988), p52.

34 O'Buachalla, (1988), p209.

While Church and majority nationalist opposition was constant, some nationalist opinion had supported the establishment of a Department of Education and local education authorities as provided for in the 1907 Irish Council Bill, on the basis that it would *'give the people of Ireland virtual control of their own education and place us on the eve of the greatest and most beneficial revolution in modern history of Ireland.'*[35] In the defence of the denominational interest the Bill was described as being at variance with Irish feeling, with Irish national rights and with Irish education interests in a context in which the 1920 Government of Ireland Bill was also under discussion.[36] Catholic school managers were direct: *'We offer our firm and united protest against the new Education Bill... we consider it necessary at the present juncture to declare as a fundamental principle that the only satisfactory education system for Catholics is that wherein Catholic children are taught in Catholic schools, by Catholic teachers, under Catholic control.'*[37] The language became more emotive. The Bill *'was the latest brazen-faced attempt by a hostile government to impose on the mind and soul of an intensely devoted Catholic people the deadly grip of the foreign fetters with which they are gravely threatened: but which, if we be only true to ourselves, and prepared to make the necessary sacrifices, we can, and we shall defeat.'*[38] The key concern behind Catholic Church opposition was the question of church and state authority in education and the nature of religious education. For Fr. T.J. Corcoran, S.J., Professor of Education at University College, Dublin, it was *'at once anti -Catholic and anti-Irish* despite the fact that the Bill contained no measure not recommended by the Maloney Report to which Corcoran had appended his signature.[39] Pastoral letters were read in every Catholic Church in Ireland, opposing the Bill. It was welcomed by the Irish National Teachers Organisation and by secondary school organisations in the Protestant tradition. It was rejected by the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland, despite its provisions for teacher improved remuneration.[40] It was supported also by some prominent in the nationalist cause and supported generally by the Protestant churches and the Unionist press.[41] The Church of Ireland Gazette charged that:

> *..the real objection of Rome (the Irish Catholic Church) to the Bill lies not in its formulation of British autocracy but of Irish democracy. This Bill gives a measure of state aid and of popular control. The Roman hierarchy will not have popular control in any shape or form. They do not state that it would not look well in these days. It would be a bad fighting case. They will not say they do not trust their own people, and so they proceed to destroy the Bill by 'belaboring' the foreigner who offers it to them.... In order to destroy this association of laymen with education, Maynooth descends to mere abuse of the foreigner.*[42]

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35 Among the Nationalists who supported these provisions were Padraig Pearse, the 1916 leader, Terence MacSwiney and Journalist D.P Moran. See O'Buachalla (1988), p52. Pearse's editorial in the Journal An Claidheamh Soluis 11/5/1907 which describes the 1907 Irish Devolution Bill as providing 'educational Home Rule.' O'Buachalla (1980) A significant Irish Educationalist Cork: Mercer Press p129.

36 O'Buachalla, (1988), p210.

37 Irish Independent, 5/3/1920, cited in Hyland, p4.

38 Pastoral letter of Bishop Foley, cited by Hyland, (1991), p4.

39 O'Buachalla, (1977), p60. Corcoran had added a 'Note' to the report as follows:'The most essential issue in the Catholic nature of Catholic schools is full Catholic control of the choice of teachers retention of teachers and removal of teachers.' See Coolahon (1984). The ASTI and Post-Primary Education in Ireland, 1909-1984; Dublin: Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland, p45.

40 See Coolahan (1984) p46-47. Salary scales and security of tenure were major issues for primary and secondary teachers in this period to 1924.

41 See Mitchell, (1995), p96-97.

42 Church of Ireland Gazette, 12th Dec, 1919 as cited in Farren (1995) p32.

Assuming any responsibility for primary and secondary education was not an agenda item for most local authority councils, dominated by Catholics obedient to their pastors in such matters. One Council condemned the Bill as a conspiracy aimed at *'The secularisation of Irish education, and not only that, but the enslavement, degradation and denationalisation of the Irish nation, if not going one better - the protestantising and maybe unchristianising of the coming generations of Irishmen.'*[43]

In March, 1920, the Dail resolved that it *'would support the bishops in setting up and maintaining a national system of education'* and secretly informed the bishops of their opposition to the Education Bill.[44] By April, the Bill fell through lack of progress and though modifications were being considered in the context of a revised bill, it failed to get on the statute books as the last British educational initiative prior to independence.[45] This was a point of 'strategic choice.' The larger political requirements constrained the counter-state to maximise its political support in its competition with the 'official state.' Civic and secular definitions of the state were weak in Irish nationalism; they were almost exclusively articulated by Protestants and suffered (from the point of view of nationalists) from association with the British official state.[46] The Technical Instruction Committees were among the very few arenas in which the competing sides on the independence issue, the political traditions in Ireland, came into continuous contact on an agreed public project.[47]

Saving the Schemes from Wreck

In 1920, the Technical Instruction Committees, as part of the local government system became embroiled in the disputes between the British administration and the Department of Local Government established by the Republican Dail. Local elections in that year had left Sinn Fein with majorities in 28 out of 33 county councils, 172 of the 206 rural councils, and 72 out of the 127 urban councils.[48] Sinn Fein controlled authorities resisted payments and generally transferred their administrative allegiance from the Local Government Board to the Department of Local Government of the Dail.[49] In the context of this 'tale of two rival administrations,'[50] Technical Instruction Committees were put in an invidious position in which the Technical Instruction Branch of the British administration insisted that grants would not be paid unless Committees submitted their accounts for audit to the officials of the Local Government Board. In the account of J.J. O'Connor, a teacher with the Co. Cork Committee for Technical Instruction, the Dail Department had instructed all authorities

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43 O'Connell, T.J. (1969), History of the I.N.T.O. Dublin:Irish National Teachers Organisation p305.

44 O'Buachalla, (1988), p210.

45 See Coolahan (1979) for an account : also O'Buachalla (1977) p54-55, 71.

46 See Kearney, H. (1997) 'Contested Ideas of Nationhood, 1800-1995' in The Irish Review, No.20, Winter/spring 1997, p1-22 for a discussion of the contest between civic and ethnocultural ideas of state among the four nations of the 'British Isles.' For Irish nationalist articulation of a more civic conception of the role of the state in education, see Mitchell, (1995), p96-97.

47 Two references to Technical Instruction in the Dail documentation survive: one suggesting that in the view of the Ministry for Irish, *'a large proportion of the expenditure is not justified by the results;'* the second, a request from Limerick Technical School for financial support as a Headmaster was in trouble with DATI for his political views. O'Buachalla, (1977), p69 and Mitchell (1995), p94: 97.

48 Daly, M.E. (1997) The Buffer State: The Historical Roots of the Department of the Environment; Dublin:. Institute of Public Administration, p50, 52.

49 See Daly (1997) opcit. p45-91.

50 The phrase is taken from Daly's Chapter title..

to withhold their accounts.[51] The difficulty for the Technical Instruction Committees was that the 'Imperial grants' were the greater proportion of the funds available to them. The rate (one penny in the £) would yield £65,000 nationally. The central grant amounts would total £438,500. According to O'Connor a nationally minded T.I.B. inspector, Hanley,[52] visited O'Connor at his class in Charleville, Co. Cork, on instructions of the Secretary of the Department, T.P. Gill. Gill requested a meeting with officers (i.e. teachers) to engage their assistance in brokering an arrangement in which the Dublin Castle administration would not carry out their threat to cut off all grants. At the meeting on a Saturday, Gill asked O'Connor to '*see the other side, i.e. the Irish Government de jure, the members of the Cabinet on the run.....*' The group next morning met Mr. W.T. Cosgrove, Dail Minister for Local Government who with '*embarrassing severity*' informed them of a recent cabinet decision to strike a single rate (one penny in the Pound) for Technical Instruction and that the Committees would '*simply have to make sacrifices.*' In O'Connor's account, the officers outlined the implications for nationalist minded committees and their officers who would loose their jobs, and suggested that if '*the schemes were to be smashed why not leave the smashing to the (British) Cabinet.*' The meeting ended by Cosgrove admitting that 'neither he nor the Cabinet had much knowledge of the Technical and Agriculture Committees' work' and asking that a report be submitted for the cabinet on the effects of their last decision.[53] O'Connor submitted the report to Cosgrove within six days. Returning to Cork, he also secured decisions from strongly nationalist Technical Instruction Committees in Cork city and county, not to object to the Local Government Board Auditor.[54] The Dail Cabinet were assured that committees were '*anxious solely to preserve their schemes intact and are prepared loyally to 'carry on' under any Authority our Government see fit to appoint for the purpose.*'[55] All other Committees were informed by O'Connor of the pragmatic Cork approach and, with one exception, agreed to the same course of action.[56] For O'Connor, '*We had saved the schemes, for neither the de facto nor the de jure governments moved, but for months after one never could tell.*' It would appear that in terms of administrative convenience, it made no sense to generate hostility among local committee members who put a higher value on technical instruction than did their Dail leaders.

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51 VE July 1948 Bulletin, p948-952. Mr. O'Connor entitled his article How the Technical Education Schemes were saved from wreck in 1920: A Fragment of Irish Educational History. I am not aware of any previous academic reference to this item.

52 Hanley who presented himself to O'Connor in 'homespun tweed' thereby indicating his affiliation to 'Irish Ireland', subsequently published a treatise called 'The National Ideal, A Practical Exposition of True Nationality appertaining to Ireland', London: Sands and Company. (No date: the Preface is dated, 1/11/1931), a cornucopia of romantic nationalism and Gaelic linguistic patriotism, written in English. 'Nationality is a parallel force only second to religion in economic value. They are sister gifts from the hand of God, and in true combination they constitute fundamental forces for national advancement.' (Preface p1).

53 V.E. Bulletin, July, 1948, p952.

54 ibid.

55 V.E. Bulletin, July, 1948, p950.

56 ibid. p952. The exception was Dun Laoghaire, (Kingstown) which objected. The authority of the Cork pragmatism was added, to by the quality of the Cork city authority's nationalist credentials in 1920. In March 1920, Tomas MacCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, was shot dead in his home. MacCurtain's successor as mayor, Terence MacSweeney, died while on a hunger strike in October, 1920. O'Connor recounts how the meeting of the Cork City Technical Instruction Committee which decided to accept the Local Government Board audit, was presided over by the successor as mayor, of these nationalist martyrs, one Donal Oge O'Callaghan. See Vocational Education Bulletin, July 1948, p952.

Independence in a Free State

The Sinn Féin candidates elected in the May, 1921 elections under the Government of Ireland Act, 1921, met as the Second Dáil, chose de Valera as President and appointed O'Kelly as the first Minister for Education, without demur.[57] Over the next eighteen months, two conferences on education policy were organised, the first on primary education which was instigated by the INTO, and opened in January 1921, the second on Secondary Education, was convened in September 1921, on the authority of the Dáil Minister for Education.[58] The Dáil Commission on Secondary Education included representatives of the local authorities, the Labour Party Executive, Gaelic League, the national and secondary teacher unions, the Universities, the Christian Brothers, the Catholic Headmasters Association and eighteen individuals deemed to be experts[59] including Rev. Timothy Corcoran, S.J. Professor of Education at University College, Dublin. Issues of the co-ordination of the entire education system were also referred to the Secondary Commission, and a working group under the chairmanship of Corcoran, in Titley's words, 'left the question of structural reorganisation untouched.'[60] In October, 1921, the Central Committee of Catholic Clerical Managers were concerned about possible changes: *'In view of the impending changes in Irish education we wish to re-assert the great fundamental principle that the only satisfactory system of education for Catholics is one wherein Catholic children are taught in Catholic schools by Catholic teachers under Catholic control.'*[61] The 'great fundamental principle' was to apply in any and all state formation that might occur on the island. The period of the deliberation for the Secondary Commission coincided with the negotiations for an Anglo Irish Treaty, and a constitution for the new Free State. When the Commission concluded its work in December, 1922, the Treaty had been signed and the Dáil and Sinn Féin had split on the issue, thus creating the political cleavage which was to dominate Irish politics for fifty years.[62] The anti-Treaty group included Kelly, the Minister for Education. With the formal hand over of power to the Provisional Government, a new Minister for Education, Fionan Lynch, was appointed in February 1922.[63] He was replaced in August by Eoin MacNeill, who was re-appointed in September following the first elections to the new parliamentary assembly of the Irish Free State.[64] The civil war, which rent the countryside from June 1922 to April 1923, put the very existence of the new state in jeopardy, deepened the animosity of political divisions and made normal government virtually impossible.[65] Farren (1995:44), and Harris (1993:119-24) outline the manner in which Catholic schools in

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57 Garvin (1997) The Birth of Irish Democracy: Dublin: Gill & MacMillan (1983) p80.

58 Titley p81.

59 The Report of the Commission does not survive Titley (1983) and O'Buachalla (1988) have presented material from the Commissions work from other sources. See Titley (1983) p82-83, O'Buachalla p60-61.

60 ibid.

61 From the Irish Catholic Directory 1922, p36, cited by Titley (1983) p84.

62 The Treaty was signed on 6th December, 1921. See Hughes (1994) p110.

63 In order to keep open the possibility of reconciliation between pro and anti-treaty sides, a Dail Minister for Education, Michael Hayes, and a Provisional Government Minister (Fionan Lynch) existed side by side from January 1922 to Sept. 1922. O'Kelly on the anti-treaty side continued to claim the title at least until Sept. 1922. See Titley p85 and O'Buachalla (1987) p203.

64 O'Buachalla, (1987) p60.

65 For accounts and analysis of the Irish Civil War see Younger, C. (1968) Ireland's Civil War. London: Muller, and Lee (1989), p56-69, and Garvin, T. (1997) 1922: The Birth of Irish Democracy, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.

Northern Ireland were urged, particularly by Michael Collins, to ally themselves with the southern state as part of the larger post treaty maneuvering for advantage on the partition issue.[66]

Officials of the Provisional Government Ministry for Education were assigned to replace the Commissioners of National Education in early 1922, and the Intermediate Commissions in June 1923.[67] In 1924, the Ministers and Secretaries Act provided for a formal transfer of the functions of these bodies, together with the Technical Instruction functions of the former Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, to the Minister and Department of Education.[68] Technical Instruction stayed with the Department of Agriculture in the Provisional Government until March 5th, 1925, when by an order of the Executive Council made under the Ministers and Secretaries Act, '*the Endowment Fund for Technical Instruction was wound up and it was provided that the expenses of the service of Technical Education should as from 2nd June, 1924, be paid out of moneys provided by the Oireachtas.*'[69]

Article 2 of the Constitution of The Free State declared the republican character of the new twenty-six county state: *All powers of government and all authority legislative, executive, and judicial in Ireland, are derived from the people of Ireland and the same shall be exercised in the Irish Free state through organisations established by or under and in accord with, the Constitution.*'[70] Article 8 precluded any law from affecting '*...prejudicially the right of any child to attend a school receiving public money without attending religious instruction at the school...*' or the making of '*... any discrimination in respect of state aid between schools under the management of different religious denominations...*'[71] The new organs of state were formally committed to *'equality of education for all those who are the subjects of education,'* and to the *'general national interest and good of the nation in general.*'[72] Article 4 provides that '*The national Language of the Irish Free State shall be the Irish language but the English language shall be equally realised as an official language'* and according to MacNeill. '*The chief function of Irish education policy is to conserve and develop Irish nationality.*'[73] The major contribution of Technical Education to this project was the development of classes in the Irish language provided for by the one penny rate for Irish classes contained in the 1923, Local Government (Temporary Provisions) Act.[74] The Act, while part of a wider set of initiatives by the first Free State government to delimit the discretion of local authorities, provided a mechanism which

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66 See Farren, (1995) p44-5 and Harris, M. (1993). The Catholic Church and the Foundation of the Northern Irish State, Cork, Cork University Press, p119-24.

67 Report of the Department of Education 1924-25. p5-6.

68 Ref. to Act Ministers and Secretaries Act, No. 16 of 1924, Section 1 (v) and Schedule Fourth Part.

69 Nat Archives S. 84/13/29 Deposition by Mr. Dalton, Senior Staff Officer, TIB, p6. O'Buachalla (1988: 60) suggests that it was not until 1927 that the T.I.B. was fully integrated with the Department of Education as established in 1924. I surmise that the presence of Fletcher until his resignation in 1927 contributed to a reluctance to change allegiance to the new ministry despite an order to that effect in 1925. See Parkes; (1990: 14).

70 In the 1937 Constitution, Article 6.1, *'all powers of government, legislative executive and judicial derive, under God, from the people...'* a slightly theocratic and less republican formulation.

71 The existence of schools (Technical schools) not denominationally affiliated would not appear to have been adverted to in the drafting. Article 44.2.1 of the 1937 Constitution contains the same wording. The 1922 exclusion of endowment of any religion, *'either directly or indirectly,'* in 1937, is rendered as a simple prohibition: *'The state guarantees not to endow any religion.'*

72 MacNeill, Minister for Education, 27th July, 1924, Dail Eireann, V.9 Col. 545, as cited in Farren (1995) p106.

73 MacNeill in TES, 31/10/1925, and quoted in Farren(1995), p107.

allowed councils to levy a penny in the pound in support of Irish classes under the aegis of the Technical Instruction Committees, thus generalising an initiative in Cork.[75]

Gill, was replaced as secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction by Meyrick a 'staff clerk in the agricultural branch.'[76] Both attended the 1923 congress of ITIA in Rathmines, Dublin at which Gill spoke his farewells, and Meyrick opened his address in Irish.[77] His minimal command of the language apparently recommended him for the senior post over the Englishman, George Fletcher, whose 1924 diaries record his distinct lack of enthusiasm for the Gaelicisation programme. *'The Gaelic Culture stunt is beginning to wear thin...',*[78] he noted, prematurely at that stage.

The new Minister MacNeill had the full confidence of the Catholic hierarchy, so too had the senior official of the new Department of Education, Joseph O'Neill.[79] Both were clear in their conception of the role of the state, in support of the Churches efforts at the education of the Catholic nation.[80] The non-denominational teacher training college in Marlborough St. was closed down and the Department prepared a policy document on 'The Gaelicisation of Ireland.'[81] O'Buachalla (1987: 253/4) describes MacNeill as having *'a strong aversion to involvement of the public authority in educational provision and very little awareness or appreciation of the role of practical education... the cautious unquestioning Minister, member of conservative governments beset by economic problems and political instability.... widely recognised as the Minister closest to the Catholic bishops.'* In January, 1926, MacNeill was replaced as Minster for Education by the T.D. for Kerry, John Marcus O'Sullivan, who was also Professor of History at University College, Dublin.[82] He too was a devout and obedient Catholic, and not amenable to Labour Party proposals for education reform.[83] The elections of June 1922 had brought a significant number of Labour and Trade Union representatives into the Dáil who, in the absence of the anti-Treaty representatives, constituted the sole opposition.[84] From these deputies and, in particular from T.J. O'Connell, deputy for Galway and General Secretary

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74 See Table 7.1 for details.

75 See Daly (1997), p118ff, & Roche (1982), p50ff, for accounts of the centralisation (and the professionalisation) of the local government service under the first Free State government. For an account of the 'Cork Initiative,' see ITIA Congress Report, 1923.

76 Parkes, (1990) 'George Fletcher and Technical Education in Ireland, 1900-1927,' in Irish Educational Studies, Vol.9, No.1, p23. Gill had written a pamphlet on Education and Citizenship: with special reference to the Labour problem. ' Gill's pamphlet was published in 1914 by Brown & Nolan Ltd., Dublin, and inter alia advocated courses in citizenship in secondary schools to include 'ethics or the doctrine of social duties, instruction in the methods and machinery of government and the history of political institutions.'

77 ITIA report, 1923 Congress, p32-33.

78 Quoted in Parkes (1990), p24.

79 See O'Buachalla (1988), p253-257 and Titley p103-4.

80 ibid. For an extended exposition of MacNeill's ideas on Church State relations in education, see Titley (1983), p91-94. O'Neill's views were most fully expressed after he retired in 'Departments of Education: Church and State' in Studies, Vol.38, No.152, Dec.1949, p419-429.

81 O'Buachalla (1988) p273 on Mulcahy Papers, UCD Archive 7/c/1/71.

82 O'Buachalla, (1987) p203.

83 A clear statement of O'Sullivan's acceptance of the role of the Church in Irish life is found in his 'The Apostleship of St. Patrick,' in The Irish Rosary, Vol.33, No.7, July, 1929, p481-490. See also Macken, M. (1948), 'Obituary of John Marcus O'Sullivan,' in Studies, Vol.37, March 1948, p6.

84 See Walker, B.M. Parliamentary Election Results in Ireland 1918-92, Dublin & Belfast: Royal Irish Academy and Institute of Irish Studies, The Queen's University of Belfast. Walker 102ff. Coakley & Gallagher (eds) (1993) Politics in the Republic of Ireland: Dublin, Folens, p266.

of the INTO ('The Irish National Teachers Organisation'), came a proposal that '*all schools and educational establishments, public and private, shall be controlled by the State, within limits to be determined by law*. This proposal was quickly condemned as repugnant to Christian doctrine, rejected by Government and submerged.[85] The teacher influenced Trade Union Congress and the Labour Party had established a committee in May 1924 which in 1925 published 'Labour's Policy on Education.'[86] The key proposals, echoing McPherson's 1919 Bill, were a representative Council of Education to advise and assist the Minister in all educational matters, and an Education Authority in each county and county borough whose main function would be the provision of accommodation and maintenance for schools.[87] The proposal for local authorities was seen as a first move in the new state against the church managerial system, drew the ire of churchmen and gained no government support.[88] The Council of Education proposal, provided it was sufficiently representative of the current managerial interests, was more acceptable to churchmen, and even gained the support of the anti-Treaty deputies, who as Fianna Fáil, had entered the Dail after a 1926 election.[89]

The Demise of the Unionist Dimension

A feature of the first decades of the Technical Instruction system was a consistent if strained 'cross-community' dimension. Two contending tendencies are evident in the reports of ITIA congresses from 1902 even up to 1934.[90] There is the primacy afforded to the potential of education in economic development and an inclination not to allow political and constitutional differences to influence the activities of Technical Instruction as a state-sponsored movement. On the other hand, it was not possible to insulate the system from tensions generated around political, cultural and constitutional issues. In general, however, the tensions were contained by unity of belief in technical instruction and a good mannered civility nurtured by group solidarity and common purpose. The Irish Technical Instruction Association was an all-Ireland body. The second congress of the Association was held in Belfast in 1903 and the Congress was again in Belfast in 1933, three years after the passing of the 1930 Act, thirteen years after the political division of the island.[91] Committees in Belfast, Larne and Co. Fermanagh were represented at the 1923 congress in Rathmines which took place in the tense atmosphere of the post- treaty civil war. But Londonderry, (city & county), Armagh, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Hollywood (Co. Down), Lisburn, Lurgan, Newry, Newtownards, and Tyrone were absent. Rupert Stanley, representing Belfast, urged that the congress would remain

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85 Walker p105 and Titley p86.

86 In Labour Party & TUC (1925) Labour Policy on Education, Dublin.

87 ibid. p21. For a discussion of these proposals see Titley (1983), p106-109, and O'Buachalla, (1988), p177-180.

88 Titley p108

89 ibid. p109.

90 Congress took place each year except 1915, 1916 and 1918. Observations here are based on an overview of the reports. In 1933, Congress was in Belfast and attended by the Northern Ireland dignitaries. In 1934, all NCI. delegates were absent from Congress. The Northern Ireland, Ministry of Education refused to pay expenses of delegates to attend. See ITIA Report, 1934, p53. Congress returned to Northern Ireland in 1996, in the context of the 'Cease-fire' that year.

91 The following Congress venues are noteworthy in this context:Newry, 1908; Manchester, 1911; Bangor, 1913; Larne, 1920; Enniskillen, 1931 and Belfast in 1903 and 1933. Source: ITIA Congress Reports, various years.

an all- Ireland body to allow for mutual lessons to be learnt from the diverging systems then developing North and South.[92]

In his view,

> *No real Irishman can be held by the invisible line that is stretched across between the two divisions, and I think that the more I meet my friends in the south, whether it be at a Technical Congress or elsewhere the more quickly will the effect of that invisible line disappear.*

In 1925, however, no Northern committee was represented at ITIA Congress. In 1926, four northern committees had returned for the Killarney Congress.[93] The 1926 Congress in Killarney saw the only direct intrusion of civil war animosities into the proceedings of the ITIA. At issue were the provisions of Section 71 of the 1925 Local Government Act. This Section required, that officers of a local authority '*...solemnly and sincerely declare that they will bear allegiance to the Irish Free State and its constitution as by law established.*'[94] No doubt this was a difficulty for some who had taken the anti-treaty side in 1923.[95] Co. Dublin delegates tried unsuccessfully to have '*... the introduction of a political test for teachers and officials of technical committees*' debated and condemned by Congress.[96] After the local election of 1928, the composition of ITIA congress delegates was altered in favour of the former anti-Free State, now Fianna Fail party. Bowen, the proposer of the motion in 1926, was now in the chair. This time the motion on the matter was taken and carried by 39 votes to 18.[97] The matter came to a head again in May 1930 when the Vocational Education Bill was being debated at Committee Stage and Section 26(1), incorporating the provisions of Section 71 of the 1925 Act was considered. The Fianna Fail members proposed that it be amended to omit the provision. Minister O'Sullivan would not accept the amendment, '*...now that everybody more or less accepts the Free State.*' The only parliamentary division on the Bill occurred on the issue. Fianna Fail and Labour voted for the amendment; the government party and independents voted against. The amendment fell.[98] Within weeks of Fianna Fail winning an overall Dail majority in January 1933, the offending Section 71 was repealed through the provisions of a Bill introduced on 8th February, 1933.[99]

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92 ITIA Congress Report, 1923. p33-35

93 See 'List of Delegates' for relevant ITIA Congress Reports.

94 Local Government Act, 1925 (Number 5 of 1925), Section 71.2.

95 Thomas Derrig, who became Fianna Fail's Minister for Education in 1932 was sacked from his post as headmaster at Ballina Technical School, according to O'Connor Lysaght, D.R., (1970) The Republic of Ireland, Cork: Mercier Press, p133.

96 See ITIA Congress Report for 1926, p81-84. Prominent among those pressing for the matter to be taken were, Mrs. Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington representing Pembroke, and Miss. K. Breen, Vice-Chairman, Kerry County Council. Gill, who though no longer in charge of the Department had been the elected President of ITIA, ruled on the matter, vocally supported by Very Rev. Canon Butler, a delegate from Sligo. On failing to have the matter voted on, the Dublin delegation withdrew in protest.

97 See ITIA Congress Report, 1929, p40-41. The minutes record that during the debate, '*a number of delegates attempted to speak at the same time, during which note-taking was impossible*'.

98 See Dail Debates, 29/5/1930, col.248. The vote was 62: 37.

99 Local Government Act, 1933, (No. 4 of 1933), Section 2.

The Widening Gulf[100]

In 1932/33, five members of the Standing Council of the ITEA[101] were from Northern Ireland. Two representatives of the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) attended the Waterford congress in 1932 along with twenty-two delegates from Regional Education Committees and Technical Instruction committees from Northern Ireland.[102] The 1933 Congress was in Belfast. The Northern Ireland Minister for Education, Viscount Charlemount, attended the opening session. So too did the Mayor of Belfast and the Vice Chancellor of the Queen's University, Belfast. A total of sixteen Northern committees had delegates nominated. But the differences in emphasis were also evident. A T.I.B. inspector, Morgan Sheehy, presented a paper on 'Rural Schools in the Saorstat;' the Principal of the Belfast Municipal Institute of Technology presented a paper on 'Technical Education in Belfast.' On the 18th Sept., 1933, the Ministry of Education, Northern Ireland, issued a circular letter stating: '*...expenses on the part of committees in connection with membership of the Irish Technical Education Association will not in the future receive the minister's approval....*' No delegates from Northern Ireland attended the Congress in Dublin in 1934. Although it was 1944 before the organisation revised its constitution to take account of the development, that was the effective end of the all-Ireland congress.[103]

In keeping with the dominant trend of the time in the twenty-six counties, the congress was becoming more Gaelic and also tending to involve the presence of more Catholic clergymen. For the first time the 1935 Congress in Wexford uses its Irish title: '*Cumann um Ceard-Oideachas In-Eireann*' for the report. Denominational service at congress was introduced for the first time at the 1937 Congress in Clonmel. It wasn't until 1954 Congress in Cork that a service for Church of Ireland members was also included in the official programme.[104]

Commission on Technical Instruction and VEC Act 1930

The political turbulence of 1926 recounted above was the context in which a Commission on Technical Education was established in 1926 to *'enquire into and advise upon the system of Technical Education in Saorstat Eireann in relation to the requirements of Trade and Industry.*' The major proposition presented by the Commission was that '*... a proper system of continuation education is of vital importance to the social and economic welfare of the people and its organisation must be*

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100 The phrase is drawn from the title of Kennedy, D (1988) 'The Widening Gulf: Northern attitudes to the independent Irish state, 1919-49. Belfast: Blackstaff Press.

101 In 1929, the association changed it's name to the Irish Technical Education Association. The matter was not debated.

102 Report of the twenty-eight Congress of ITIA, Waterford, 1932. p4,10-12.

103 The 1944 Constitution changed the name to 'Irish Vocational Education Association' (IVEA) and provided for representation on Standing Council for VEC Committees only. Membership remained technically open to '*Every statutory Committee appointed under Education Acts in Ireland for the management of continuation and/or Technical Education..*' Constitution as adopted 14th June 1944, IVEA Congress Report, 1944, p92. The 1944 constitution remains operative with minor amendments.

104 See Programme for relevant Congress Report.

undertaken without delay.'[105] We explored in Chapter 8, the focus of the Commission on Technical Education Report 1927, on the economic roles for technical and vocational education. Membership of the Commission included four Civil Servants, (Education, Finance, Lands and Agriculture, and Industry and Commerce), two members of Parliament (Labour Party and Independent Business Men's Party) and two non-national technical experts.[106] At the time of the commission's appointment, the Labour Party provided the only organised opposition to the Government in parliament; Good from the Business Mens' Party, was from the Unionist tradition and supported the government on most matters.[107] The remaining member of the Commission was Mr. J. J. O'Connor, headmaster of Mallow Technical School, (and intermediary of 1920 crisis) representing teachers. The Commission Secretary was from the Department of Education and it was chaired by John Ingram a senior T.I.B. inspector.[108] We have examined in Chapter 8 the nature of the enquiries undertaken by the Commission. What is most evident is that there was no suggestion to depart from the broad governance structure already in place. The only new suggestions being the reduction of the membership to twelve, and discontinuing the practice of joint education and agricultural committees.[109] The rating authority would provide the majority of the membership and the local committee would have '*local control over minor expenditure.*'[110]

In 1927, the newly formed Department of Education was reporting on its reconstruction of the educational system and the gaelicisation and democratisation of education itself: -
'a completely new system of education is in progress of being erected.... there is being constructed and their has already being carried into effect a system which will provide an educational highway from the infant school to the university for every boy or girl in Saorstat Eireann, who is capable of benefiting from such education.'[111] A self-confident assertion that a new, co-ordinating department aimed: *'to substitute for the old system in which post-primary education was a luxury for the children of the well-to-do, a democratic system in which no distinction of class or means will be permitted to prevent any section of the population from obtaining the benefits of post-primary education.'*[112] The 1926 School Attendance Act, requiring school attendance to age 14, the establishment of special all-Irish secondary schools as a 'fast-track' method of providing Irish speaking national teachers, and the introduction of an optional 'Primary Certificate' examination to the National school system, were the key structural innovations to date.[113] The legislation arising from the Technical Education Commission Report would carry a major portion of the burden of the programme of increased democratisation and increased access. We have noted in Chapter 8 how the internal civil service deliberations, and indeed the Dail discussions on the terms of the Bill drafted to

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105 ibid. p51.
106 See Chapter 8. Footnote 18, p191.
107 ibid.
108 ibid. Fletcher, as Ingram's senior might have expected to undertake the chair. He loyally gave evidence and shortly thereafter retired and returned to England. See Parkes (1990)
109 Report of the Commission on Technical Education, (1927), p113-114.
110 ibid. p113
111 Nat. Arch. Dept. of Taoiseach. S.5360/6. Memo 26/4/1927. 'Review of the Work of the Department of Education.'
112 ibid.

give effect to the recommendations of the Commission report, gave rise to only minor points of dissent. Apprenticeship was excluded at the request of the Industry and Commerce Department, which would introduce a Bill in 1931. The Department of Finance was anxious to minimise the exchequer commitments and to secure agreements to a twenty year phasing-in of the new system.[114]

Constrained at Establishment: Minister and Bishops

It was not until after negotiations with all the other relevant parties were completed, that the Minister O'Sullivan who introduced the 1930 Vocational Education Bill, turned his attention to meeting concerns held by Church authorities. Issues of import for the Bishops arose from the proposal for Continuation Schools, to 'continue and supplement education provided in elementary schools.'[115] The Bishops sought a meeting with the Minister on 12 October, 1930, after the Bill had been passed. The letter of the 31 October was the Minister's response to the points raised. Perusal of files available on the preparation of the Vocational Education Bill for parliamentary debate hold no evidence of consultation with the church interest on the Bill prior to this date.[116] His caution on the cultural role of the 'continuation schools' when under pressure in Dail debates, indicated Minister O'Sullivan's sensibility to potential areas of conflict. Responding to a proposal from Deputy Frank Fahey (Fianna Fail) to include '*instruction in the Irish language and literature, national history, music, topology and folklore*' in the definition of continuation education, Minister O'Sullivan argued that these items were contained by implication in the definition of 'Continuation education' as a continuation of elementary education. He did not, however, want to be explicit about the matter. '*I dislike seeming to expand formally, ..though not actually, the scope of the Bill.... I dislike to expand the scope of the Bill, as in my opinion, it would raise far reaching questions in educational control.*'[117] It is clear that the Minister felt, one, that he needed to ward off clerical objections, and two, that he had done sufficient to achieve that. Writing to the Bishop of Limerick on the 31 October 1930, (almost three months after the passing of the Act in July),

Minister O'Sullivan pointed out:

> *I strove to secure, with success, as I believe, that the act should not run counter to established Catholic practice in this country, or to the spirit of the Maynooth decrees governing these matters. This was one of the reasons why I insisted so strongly on the vocational character of the instruction to be provided under the Act.....*
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> *Care has been also taken that this power (in the Act) cannot be used to compel the students, to which the compulsory clause has been made applicable, to attend any particular type of school.... I believe that a wide liberty of choice should be left with the parent.....*

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113 See O'Buachalla, (1988), op.cit. p257.
114 See Chapter 8, especially footnotes 50-58 above.
115 Section 3, V.E. Act 1930.
116 Nat. Arch. D.F. S84/13/29.
117 Dail Debates, 20th, May 1930. Co.229-230.

By their very nature and purpose the schools to be provided under this act are distinctly not schools for general education. General education, after the age of 14 years, as well as before the age of 14 years, will continue to be given in primary and in secondary schools.

When we can afford to make more universal a system of general education for post-primary pupils, it cannot be through the medium of these continuation schools.

No subject of instruction is mentioned in the act. The act does not profess to set out a curriculum. I think, however, that facilities for the giving of religious instruction should be provided by the vocational committees. I cannot believe that any committee will fail in this respect. If, however, any committee should fail I see no reason why we should not use our general powers of approval of courses to bring pressure to bear on them to make the necessary provisions.... rooms should be set aside for this purpose and the time for religious instruction should be incorporated with the general class plan.[118]

O'Sullivan's letter to the bishops offers assurances on five points. First, he concedes a superior authority to the Catholic Church in respect of education by his statement that he had strove, with success as he believed, that the act would not run counter to established Catholic practice in this country or the spirit of the Maynooth decrees governing these matters. What was being conceded was clearly understood. The relevant 'Maynooth decree' was that which in 1927, required Catholics, inter alia, under pain of sin not to attend non-Catholic primary or secondary schools (or Trinity College Dublin).[119] This position reflected the general Roman Catholic view outlined in the 1918 version of Canon Law in which Canon 1374 states:

Catholic children may not attend non-Catholic, neutral or mixed schools, that is, those which are open also to non-Catholics. It pertains exclusively to the local bishops to decide, in accordance with instructions of the Holy See, under what circumstances and with what precautions against the danger of perversion, attendance at such schools may be tolerated.[120]

An encyclical letter from the Pope to all Catholics in 1929, addressed questions of Catholic education and reaffirmed the general position of the 1918 Canon Law.[121] In establishing special all-Irish schools for future national schoolteachers, the denominational principle had been conceded by the state in 1926/27.[122] The point in respect of the VEC system, however, was that this was different. Vocational, even continuation education, was sufficiently different to warrant the assertion that it was not an encroachment on clerical prerogatives. That, however, was not how the matter was seen by one contemporary clerical critic.[123] For him, the continuation courses would be in competition with primary schools and the technical courses would be in competition with secondary schools and university colleges.

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118 See full text of the letter in O'Buachalla (1988), p399-403. This letter was first referenced in the public domain in 1971. See Whyte, J.H. (1971, 1980) Church and State in Modern Ireland, Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, p38.

119 See Titley, E.B. (1983) Church, State and the Control of Schooling in Ireland, 1900-1944, Kingston & Mentreal:McGill-Queens University Press & Gill & MacMillan, p121 and Rogan, E. (1987) Synods and Catechesis in Ireland, C. 445-1962, Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, p105-6. The pastoral letter of the Bishops in Synods, clearly asserts the 'Irish Church to have obtained a grip of great strength upon education by this time.

120 As quoted in Titley (1983), p130

121 Divini Ilius Magistri (1929): 'We endorse and confirm.... the prescription of Canon Law which forbids Catholic children on any pretext whatsoever to attend neutral or 'mixed' schools....' - cited in Titley (1983), opcit. p121.

122 See O'Buachalla (1988), p221.

123 Educator 'The Vocational Education Bill' in Irish Rosary, June, 1930, p433-437. The Editor in a supporting post-script identifies the author as 'a veteran Irish Christian Brother'.

These schools will really be primary schools... They will give an all-round education... Now the serious matter is that these schools will be free from managerial control. They will be subject to the Technical Branch of the Education Department. Whatever may happen accidentally, they will be purely secular schools like the Trade Preparatory Schools.... Are we then to have two classes of schools which are a fundamentally a denial of the principles on which the Managerial system is based?

There was cause for concern, too, in the Technical courses... *'These schools (*Borough Technical Schools*) if established, will overlap Secondary Schools in the first two years of their courses and the University Colleges in the third and fourth.... The priests and people of Ireland will need to sit up and take notice. The new Vocational Education Bill, is a further step in purely secular education under local authorities.'*[124]

The Bishops did not adopt this hard line position.[125] No doubt the assurances given about religious instruction and their confidence about the future role of clergymen in the committee system, not by right but by virtue of a general social expectation, was critical. In Northern Ireland, they had been prepared to finance two continuation education schools 'very similar to those proposed in the Free State's recent Education Act.'[126]

The remaining assurances, i.e. that there was no provision for compulsion, that parental choice was not impaired, and that when *'we can afford to make more universal a system of general education for post-primary pupils, it cannot be through the medium of these continuation schools,'* dealt with all the 'far-reaching questions in educational control' to the satisfaction of the bishops.

It is difficult to understand the acquiescence of the bishops in the establishment of continuation schools. The most logical view is that they understood the new system as a minimal threat to existing primary or to secondary schools and were confident in their capacity to influence local political representatives.[127] As a further assurance they had ministerial undertakings in respect of future development. Bishops acquiesced in the establishment of a Department of Education by the Provisional Government when they had resisted such a body under the British regime. In doing so, they had ceded the legitimacy of a co-ordination role for the state in education. They had also left uncontested the principles of local control in technical education. Continuation education as a concept had grown out of the discourse of technical education and its organisational needs and structures. It appears that their confidence about the general position of the Church role in education policy, together with the assurances they had received would allow them to ignore the possibility of strong competition to church institutions from the new schools. They discounted the views contained in

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124 ibid.

125 An insight into episcopal thinking is provided in the case of the supply of Technical education in Derry in 1929-30. In the words of the local bishop the Municipal Technical school could be attended by Catholics because '....it provides only a vocational training.... It makes no pretence at furnishing a complete education.' Bishop Kane of Derry, 1930, quoted in Harris, (1993).

126 See Harris, M. (1993) 'The Catholic Church and the Foundation of the Northern Irish State,' Cork, Cork University Press, p224-225, which cites the above from TES 27/9/1930.

127 From the 1907 Devolution Bill to the 1919 Education Bill, the General Council of County Councils had vehemently supported the clerical prerogatives in education.

broadside in the Irish Rosary cited above which was keenly aware of the competitive challenge of the new schools castigated as: *'...simply a low-grade secondary school, with a practical bias, but without on atom of religion. Of course, that there is no religion in purely Technical Classes is not objectionable - but full-time Day Schools giving an all-round education without religion! They may well cause the pastors of our people to stare and gasp.'*[128]

In keeping with his assurances to the bishops, instructions were sent to Committees making good the Minister's undertakings. In a memorandum, Committees were instructed that *Vocational schools should have a definite technical trend. The mode of conducting such schools and classes and the methods of instruction employed should differ radically from those of the primary or secondary school. A definite break as to subject matter and its treatment is needed all through the Vocational course. Where subjects of the ordinary school curriculum are included they should be treated with a view to their direct utilisation in employment.'* On religious instruction committees were directed to *'provide facilities for Religious Instruction and incorporate it in the general class time-table. The local ecclesiastical authorities should be approached with regard to the provision of the actual teaching.... the time set apart for Religious Instruction should have a reasonable relation to the time given to the course as a whole.'*[129] It was also directed that 'separate instruction should be provided for boys and girls.[130]

In 1932, 154 of 467 VEC members or twenty five percent, were clergymen - 132 Catholic and 22 Protestant. Twenty-five committees, of the total of thirty eight, that is approximately two-thirds, had Catholic clergymen in the Chair.[131] Sufficient concessions to the Bishops' requirements, in terms of Catholic practice, clerical participation and institutional competition, had been made to win the tacit acceptance of the church for the opening years of the new system.

Education Politics under Fianna Fail

The government changed in 1932. Eamonn de Valera became President of the Executive Council of the Free State or Taoiseach. The new administration was to hold office until 1948 and de Valera's Minister for Education, Thomas Derrig, was to be minister for that period, almost without interruption.[132]

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128 Educator 'The Vocational Education Bill' in Irish Rosary, June, 1930, p433-437. In 1982, Sean O'Connor a senior Dept. of Education official told a public audience of a bishop who complained to him of the Hierarchy being 'tricked' by Minister O'Sullivan who persuaded them that these new continuation schools did not provide competition for Secondary schools. O'Connor, S. (1982) Inaugural J.M. O'Sullivan Memorial Lecture, Tralee, 9/12/1982, unpublished Mimeo. On that occasion O'Connor went on to say: '....if J.M. O'Sullivan had tricked the bishops about the 1930, Act they subsequently trumped his ace by getting control of the Vocational Education Committees.' ibid. p9.

129 Dept. of Education, Memorandum, V1, 1931, p9.

130 ibid. p6.

131 This data is presented in Ward (forthcoming), 'Politicians, Clergy and Mutual Friends: ' The Politics of the Committee 1930-1972' in Logan (ed.) forthcoming. I am grateful to John Logan of the University of Limerick for access to this data.

132 For short periods in 1940-1941, de Valera, and S.T. O'Kelly held the portfolio.

The most significant impact of the 1932 change of government on the VEC system was to raise the relative priority and profile of the Gaelicisation programme as part of the mission of the Vocational Education system. The Local Government Act 1933 repealed the application of Section 71 of the 1925 Local Government Act, with the effect that a statement of allegiance to the state, or 'any other political tests' would not apply to public servants, including employees of VECs. Given that appointments were in the gift of Committees whose membership was appointed by local government politicians, the continued association of VEC appointments with political clientilism became inevitable.[133] At central government level the role of the political in appointments was also at issue. We have seen how the transition from British to Free State administration was followed by personnel changes at the senior levels of the Technical Instruction Branch. In 1934, Padraig O'Cochlainn, a relatively junior private secretary to the new Minister for Education Derrig, was nominated by the Secretary of the Department, O'Neill, for appointment to the vacant senior administration post in the Technical Institution Branch.[134] O'Neill, the Education Secretary argued that O'Cochlainn's enthusiasm for the language was the primary reason for the irregular promotion.[135] When Finance officials proved stubbornly resistant, it was argued that O'Cochlainn was needed in the T.I.B. as a counter to the enthusiastically developmental approaches of the Chief Inspector of the T.I.B., John Ingram. Ingram's energy was, apparently, a source of some discomfort to O'Neill and his colleagues in the senior ranks of the Department of Education. O'Cochlainn's appointment was not finally confirmed until the Minster for Finance brought his officials' concerns to the Taoiseach (de Valera) who sided with Education and approved O'Cochlainn's appointment.[136]

Departmental Committee on Raising the School Leaving Age, 1934-36

In 1933, a memorandum on 'Educational Reconstruction' was prepared for de Valera by the Secretary for the Department of Education, Seosamh O'Neill.[137] In 1934, a departmental committee was

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133 The interviews for this study provide repeated examples of the interaction between candidates for teaching posts and committee members in respect of appointments. The role of Committee members in appointments was modified in 1967 by Ministerial intervention and further in 1997 by agreement between the Teachers Union and IVEA representing VECs.

134 Nat. Archive E 51/5/54. Remarks made in an interview with the author by a Department of Education official drew my attention to this episode. The interviewee recalled accompanying O'Cochlain to meet the new Minister in 1948 and he (O'Cochlain) being in some dread as to the reception he would receive from the new Minister, the leader of Fine Gael, General Richard Mulcahy, and the first pro-Treaty Minister he was to encounter since his appointment, fourteen years earlier.

135 ibid. A Finance official to the Secretary of the Department of Education, O'Neill commented in a memo dated 31/10/1934, '*...it is perhaps not an unfair comment to say that your letter reads as if the promotion of the Irish language in Technical schools is more important than the teaching and administration of Technical Instruction itself.* (E.51/5/34). O'Neill maintained:'*The position of the Irish language in Technical schools is of paramount importance at the moment. If we fail that essential part of our policy now, we shall fail permanently since Irish is dying fast in its natural strongholds. That is why it is of vital importance that at least one of the heads of Technical Instruction should not only be a man with a thorough knowledge of Irish, but one with such a dynamic personality that he will be able to carry through a task of the greatest urgency as well as of the greatest difficulty*' Letter: E348/73, dated 3/11/34.

136 ibid. Memo dated 5/11/1934:Boland of Finance reports O'Neill as having another reason for preferring O'Cochlainn. '*This reason has relation to the position of Mr. Ingram, the Chief Inspector of Technical Instruction. Mr. Ingram does not know Irish but his is a very forceful and a very insistent person in respect of the ordinary work of Technical Instruction. In that position he is rather a specialist. The people administratively above him (the Secretary and Assistant Secretary) have not the knowledge of Technical Instruction matters that they have of Primary and Secondary Education and are not, therefore, in as good a position to control Mr. Ingram as they might otherwise be. Mr. O'Neill, speaking no doubt on behalf of his Minister and not merely his own opinion, admits that Mr. O'Cochlainn knows nothing about Technical Education but stresses markedly his knowledge of Irish, his national outlook and his personality..... I said sufficient to Mr. O'Neill to make him understand that, from our point of view this promotion, if made, is going to be regarded very unfavourably in the service, having, as it will, every appearance of jobbery....*'

137 See O'Buachalla (1988) p23-233,262, for details.

established to make proposals to the Minister about raising the school leaving age. The committee reported in 1935.[138] The issue was linked with the provision of schooling for the poorer Gaeltacht (Irish – speaking) areas of the country – a concern central to the Gaelicisation programme and one in which the state's legitimate concern was not open to challenge.

The key proposals of the inter-departmental committee suggest that senior Department of Education officials, (outside the Technical Instruction Branch) as early as 1934/5, had serious reservations about the long-term prospects for the VEC system. They had begun to advocate the development of Senior Primary schools, as a type of Middle school with which to give effect to an extended compulsory school provision.[139] The Senior or Higher Primary School, with a practical curriculum would provide *'the equivalent of a secondary school suited to the rural population and the requirements of an agricultural community.'*[140] The strongest proponent of this proposal appears to have been S. O'Neill, Secretary of the Department of Education.[141] In 1934, the proposals to establish such a system in Gaeltacht areas were brought to Cabinet which deferred their own decision to allow the Minister for Education, (following approval of the Minister for Finance), to discuss certain aspects of the scheme with members of the Catholic hierarchy.[142] When the bishops responded, they were concerned: that the *'scheme involves a further extension of State control,'* and that, *'from the moral point of view, there is danger from boys and girls from 12 - 16 year of age coming from long distances without any supervision.'* They concluded their remarks by observing that *'the need for such schools does not seem to be apparent in view of the existence of Vocational schools.'*[143]

It is apparent that the VEC system has been successful in retaining the support of the Catholic hierarchy for the fledgling system. Through his direct involvement with VECs around the country in the establishment of almost a hundred new schools between 1931 and 1935, Ingram had ample opportunity to engage with senior diocesan clergy and their bishops. The annual congresses, with their large contingent of clerical delegates and visitors were also available. The operation of the VEC's had provided no cause for disquiet yet, and the bishops supported the VECs. Initiatives like the 1937 address of welcome for the Archbishop of Cashel when he attended the reception at the medieval church site of the Rock of Cashel during the 1937 ITEA congress, illustrate the sense of dependence felt by the VEC system on church support and their willingness to secure that support by compliance with church requirements. On that occasion, Dr. Burke, Senior Inspector declared to the visiting church dignitaries his *'sincere appreciation of his Lordship's magnificent co-operation with the Association (ITEA) in the work they had begun... it was great to know that they had the Church*

138 ibid. See also Dept. of Education Report, 1937-38, p57.
139 For a discussion of the report see O'Buachalla, p231-2 plus (Note p420).
140 S.PO. S 2512. Note from Secretary to Government to Department of Education 3/2/1934, cited in O'Buachalla, p232 (p420).
141 ibid.
142 ibid.
143 Minutes of General Meeting of the Hierarchy, 9/10/1934, quoted in O'Buachalla, p231 from D.F. S20/1/34.

with them in their work... '[144] The president of the association, on the same occasion, was even more explicit:

> *The impossibility of administering the system of education contemplated by the Vocational Education Act of 1930, without the hearty goodwill and co-operation of the clergy, was realised by the Minister for Education and by all our local authorities. Hence, when the committees were being formed, those appointed included in all cases a considerable number of clergymen who, as members, were placed in a position to guide the committees in matters of faith or morals. The help they have given in securing that the attention is given to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the young people attending our vocational schools, is appreciated by us all.*[145]

In reply, the visiting Archbishop of Cashel declared:

> *One of the things that gave him most pleasure was the reference to the spiritual as well as the material education of the boys and girls. Education should be of the soul as well as the body and it was a great pleasure for him to find the present system of vocational education looked to both. Another matter that gave him cause for gratification was finding that there was such a beautiful spirit of co-operation between the priests and the laity in the matter of technical education. The priests and the people in Ireland have always been together. They were together in the days of persecution, and it is a grand thing to see them together today and I pray that it may always be the case in holy Ireland. One reason why I was glad to come here today was to show my appreciation of the work of technical education, which is being done, in this country. Taken all in all, there is a splendid system of education in the Free State, and that of technical education is not the least excellent in our departments of education.*[146]

Such harmonious and mutually satisfactory arrangements, understandably, would not easily be sacrificed by the Catholic hierarchy for the prospects outlined in the Department of Education's proposals for radical change which would have such disruptive effects on the vocational system. In this context, vocational school wholetime enrolments grew from 9,000 in 1932 to 15,000 in 1939 and over a hundred new schools were built. By 1939 the new system had moved from having 23% of post-primary pupils in 1932, to having 29% in 1939 – a level never again realised.[147]

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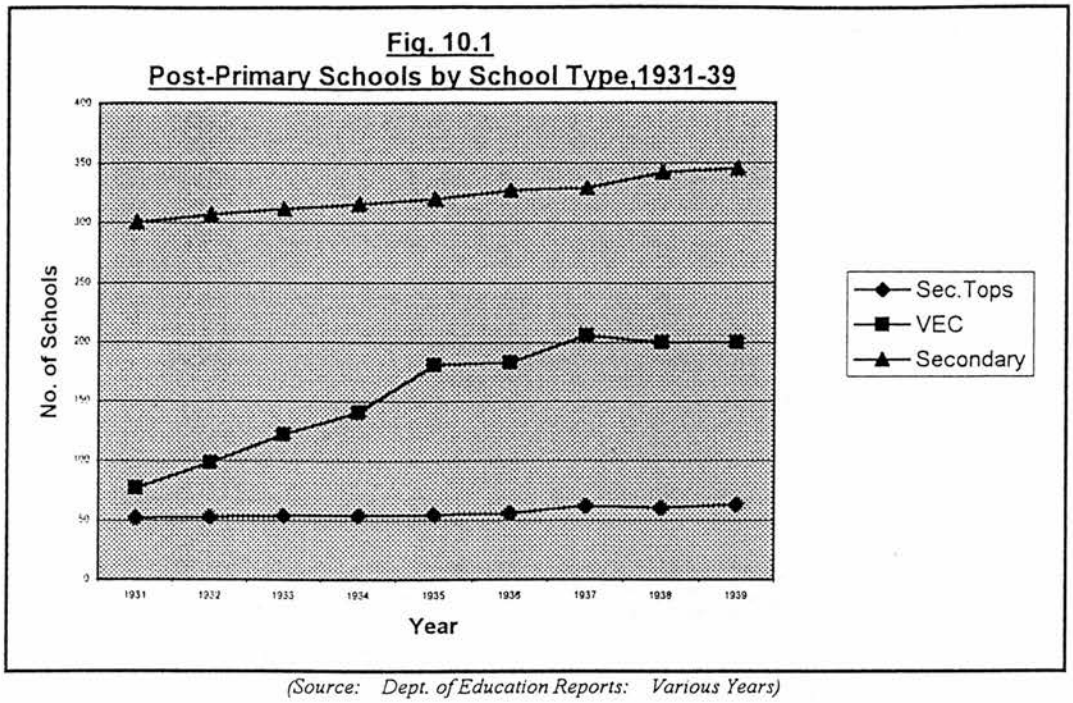
144 ITEA Congress Report, 1937, p60.
145 ibid. p63.
146 ibid. p64.
147 See Chapter 7, Table 7.4



(Source: Dept. of Education Reports: Various Years)

The Brenan Controversy and Memorandum V40

The reservation in some clerical and religious quarters about the VEC schools and their continuation courses which had been expressed in the 'Irish Rosary' in 1930, reappeared in 1940. In April 1940, The Standard newspaper published an unascribed article in which the author criticises vocational schools as inappropriate for the children of rural families.[148] *'These schools serve as a type of secondary school for many children... they provide facilities for children of poor parents.... Why not add a little hut to the National school and there in the traditional atmosphere of the school teach woodwork one day, domestic economy another day, and rural science yet another and thus.... eliminating the need for Vocational Education of the 1930 Act style altogether.'*[149] A more weighty and extended critique appeared the following year. Rev. Martin Brenan, M.A. Ph.D. was Professor of Education at Maynooth College when in February 1941 he published an article severely critical of the Vocational Schools.[150]

Brenan argued from the 1930 definition of continuation education which related it to the education provided in primary schools, that there were two separate aspects to continuation education: *'...the formation of the responsible man as an individual and as a member of society, and the preparatory training of the skilled worker.'* From this he argued that *'...formation of the man is his formation as a rational being, the formation of his religious, mental, moral and emotional life'* and then to say, that:

148 The Standard 26th April 1940. The article is reproduced and responded to in the July 1940 edition of The Vocational Education Bulletin, p365.

149 ibid. p364.

> *Foremost in the curriculum should be the inculcation of spiritual and moral values which will serve the young people... as standards of life and conduct... If the young person does not obtain this discipline and formation, it does not matter what technical or practical efficiency he possesses: he will be merely an economic unit, an unthinking, amoral, soulless cog in a ruthless machine. Formal religious instruction then is indispensable... it is elementary Catholic doctrine that religion must be the soul and foundation of all general education.*[151]

The problem for Brenan was that *'For all practical purposes, religion has no status in these schools.'*[152] Then, in an undermining rhetorical question, he asked: *'Seriously, can there be authority, religious, moral or disciplinary in such schools?'* He goes on to raise a last objection on the score of co-education or co-instruction a practice that went on despite an early memorandum from the Department of Education and was *'From any point of view.. altogether undesirable'* and *'against our Christian instincts and principles,'* and was, *'not even tolerated in Nazi Germany'* and reprobated by the Encyclical on the 'Christian Education of Youth.'[153] Avoiding making a direct recommendation, Brenan, nonetheless makes clear what his solution is:

> *There are many over the country who think that the curriculum of the continuation schools would be provided more efficiently in national schools - a central national school in each area to be designated, full-time attendance to be exacted from all unemployed young people in the area... the 'general' education might be given by trained national teachers... the practical subjects taught by practical instructors.*

This proposal would provide employment for a large number of unemployed national teachers, it would prevent unnecessary public expenditure on new schools and *'...it would secure a continuous religious, moral, and disciplinary formation for our youth in the years they most need it.'*[154] The root of the problem was that *'Our first efforts at educational legislation were in the liberalistic tradition of those countries where public education had been secularised.. the shallowness and the superficiality of the liberal and the secular tradition.'*[155]

Memorandum V40

The response of the Vocational Education system was a Memorandum from the Technical Instruction Branch of the Department of Education on Organisation of Whole-Time contribution courses in Borough, Urban and County areas issued to VEC's in the first days of 1943.[156] O'Buachalla (1988: 269) reports that a departmental committee was established to produce the document. McDwyer

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150 Brenan, M. (1941) 'The Vocational Schools' in Irish Ecclesiastical Record (A Monthly Journal under Episcopal Sanction) Vol. LVII, 2 and Vol. LVII, 8 p406-418. Curiously, J.M. O'Sullivan has a series of articles in the same volume of this journal under the title: 'Reflections on some ideologies of Today & Yesterday.'

151 ibid. p123

152 ibid.

153 ibid.

154 ibid.

155 ibid.

156 Department of Education, Technical Instruction Branch, (n.d.) Memorandum V 40. Organisation of Whole-time Continuation Courses in Borough, Urban and County Schemes. The copy sent to Co. Kerry VEC was stamped received on 7/1/1943.

identified J.P. Hackett and Morgan Sheehy, senior inspectors in the T.I.B. as the principal authors.[157] The memorandum sets out to meet all the observations of its critics. The key problem was with the pressure on the system from those Catholic spokespersons for whom the continuation courses were courses of general education and the general education process was essentially religious and therefore subject to ecclesiastical control. For them the only satisfactory solution was to *'...scrap the vocational system as at present administered... and start the system over again on new and thoroughly Catholic lines.'*[158] A key section of Memo V.40 on Religious Instruction and Social Education'[159] was designed to *'...safeguard the general purpose of education'* couched in undeniably theological terms:

> *...to develop, with the assistance of God's grace, the whole man with all its faculties, natural and supernatural, so that he may realise his duties and responsibilities as a member of society, that he may contribute effectively to the welfare of his fellow man, and by doing so attain the end destined for him by his Creator.'*[160] *'For this development it is essential that all pupils, with due regard to the rights of parents, should receive instruction in the fundamentals of the Christian faith.' '...It is necessary not only that Religious Instruction be given, but that the teaching of every other subject be permeated with Christian charity and that the whole organisation of the school, whether in work or recreation be regulated by the same spirit.'*[161]

The injunction on the teaching of religion in the first Memorandum VI is reiterated and a recommended time indicated.[162] The need for separate programmes for boys and girls is presented (p.17).

The memorandum addressed the criticism of rural schools' contribution to rural out-migration presenting a view of social change in minimalist terms. Rural continuation courses in rural areas serve the *'...needs of those young persons who will continue the same way of life as their parents.'* But there were others,

> *'born in rural areas.... unable to find a living there and... (they) will have to leave home sooner or later.' '...the two year rural continuation courses for boys and girls is as good an antidote as schools can provide to undue migration from the land. It not only helps to produce competent farmers and capable housewives but also gives young people a training which should lead to the development of new types of rural occupation and a thoroughly rural economy.'*[163]

This form of analysis had been the staple of ITEA congress since 1933 when Morgan Sheehy as a young inspector first addressed the topic of the rural vocational school in Belfast.[164] Responding to a set of social conditions that had existed *'...for generations, and not susceptible to sudden change...,'* there was an unshakeable confidence in the economic relevance of the vocational school system as it was being developed.

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157 At interview with the author for this study. Hackett was chairman of the TIB 'office committee', which prepared the memorandum: Nat. Archive: S12891B. Note by Hackett to 1947 Memorandum, dated 18.7.1947.

158 The position of the Conference of Convent Secondary Schools in their Annual Report, for 1949 p52, as cited by O'Buachalla (1988), p271.

159 Memo V.40 p22.

160 ibid.

161 ibid.

162 Memo. V.40 p8,9 & 18.

163 ibid. p21

164 ITEA Congress Report, 1933.

Memorandum V40 was perceived as of significance for those working in the VEC system. For its authors it was a conscious effort to denominationalise continuation education.[165] McDwyer was not clear about Brenan's role in offering a critique of the Vocational Sector, but he was very clear about the primary purpose of V40.

O'Reilly
Do you remember there was a celebrated controversy where a professor of education in Maynooth...that was in 1941, you had just gone to Mooncoin then.
McDwyer
I didn't know a thing about it then. Never even heard about it. But I know it did disturb the Department, the Technical Instruction Branch of the Department to some extent and Joe Hackett, who was Vice Chief Inspector at the time made a magnificent defense of our side (to put it that way), in writing and issuing Memorandum V.40.
O'Reilly
That was the response?
McDwyer
That was. That remains a very valid and extremely good defense of the attitude of the vocational schools. There is one sentence in it was enough, to, shall I use the word 'convert' most bishops and priests of the country who might have been wavering and it said 'that the good school, like the good home, should mirror the attitude in the home of Nazareth, where Mary worked as a housewife and Joseph helped his father as a carpenter.'
O'Reilly
The thing at national level was more tense, the Department had taken more account of the views of bishops and theologians.....
McDwyer
I mean bishops had to be concerned with broad policy. They also had of course the task of maintaining their numbers and their seminaries and all that kind of thing. There was, now I couldn't say it from personal experience, but certainly when I entered a Department, all the inspectorate of the technical instruction branch were convinced that there was an element of bishops who were totally opposed to the whole idea of schools that were not under direct clerical management.
O'Reilly
You wouldn't have any particular bishops identified now for that?
McDwyer
No I couldn't, no.
O'Reilly
Just one other thing about that, were vocational schools perceived in your experience as being multi-denominational schools or were they perceived to be denominational?
McDwyer
Only in the very early years and that, the doubt about co-education and multi-denominationalism didn't survive, certainly didn't survive 1945. After that it wasn't a factor that I ever heard of cast up anywhere. But before that, yes, yes you would occasionally have criticism.

Summary

In reviewing the institutional politics around the establishment and early development of the VEC system, it is apparent that the state had established but limited autonomy in a context where Church dominance was successfully asserted. Three points are recounted at which proposals were kept off the agenda for implementation by virtue of direct Church influence: the MacPherson Bill was withdrawn in response to the political pressure mobilised by the Catholic Church interest; secondly,

the revolutionary Dail delayed the establishment of an Education Ministry and focused the work of the newly established Department on the Gaelicisation programme; thirdly, the 1934-36 proposals for Senior Primary were (a) submitted to the bishops by Cabinet as to a higher authority and (b) directly vetoed. This suggests a growing Church dominance and state capacity to assert itself. On the other hand, direct assertion of educational functions for the pre-independence state are evident, 1) in the establishment of the Technical Instruction Committees and their multiple links with the state representative and administrative organisations, 2) in the establishment of a Department and Ministry of Education which assumed the responsibilities of preceding national governing boards and became a locus for initiative and development; and finally with the establishment of the system of continuation education provided for in the 1930 VEC Act. The establishment of systems of Technical education (1899) and continuation education (1930) created the segmentation of a system, which had been organised in a sequential, three step progression – elementary, secondary and university. Using a rhetoric of education for economic development in which a state function was not contested, a publicly owned and governed system of education was introduced into the new state. The existence of a local authority tier in the governance of technical education ensured that the balance of administrative convenience was with its continuance at two critical points of decision: the transfer to the new state and the creation of the system of continuation education.

Finally, it is noted that in the period covered by the Chapter there are three phases of 'change and continuity' in the policy community with concomitant changes and continuity in policy emphasis: The decline of the, unionist input (exemplified by Plunkett and Fletcher) coincided with the diminution of the technical/industrial emphasis evident in the Technical Instruction Committees work and its replacement as the main focus of Vocational education by a system of continuation education through rural schools. Nonetheless, this tradition was transferred into the new state via Gill, and Ingram and the Commission on Technical Education only to become a minor motif with the arrival of a third set of key figures, (O'Cochlainn and Derrig), and the rising emphasis on Gaelicisation as an object of the system.

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165 J.P Hackett Note 18.7.1994 to 1947 Memorandum. Nat Archive S. 123891B. See below.

CHAPTER 11

FROM COMPETITION TO SYSTEMATISATION THE POLITICS OF THE VEC: 1944 to 1963

In this Chapter a number of decision making episodes in relation to the VEC system in the period 1944 –1963 are examined:

- The 1947 Murray Report which recommended the demise of the system.
- The 1954 Council of Education Report and its reversal of that position.
- The 1962 Duggan Report which recommended a unified post-primary system and local education authorities.
- The introduction of Comprehensive Schools 'Irish Style' in 1963.

As well as continuing an institutional narrative of the politics of the VEC system, the Chapter will allow for the examination of the identity and location of the policy community of the period. We have seen in Chapters 7 to 9 the manner in which local social and economic conditions influenced the growth of the VEC system. In this Chapter we will attempt to identify the mechanisms by which institutional adjustments were effected at national level in response to these social and economic conditions. While policy adjustment in this period is minimal, the initiation of policy, as in 1934-36, is typically highly centralised, with the Prime Minister or Taoiseach, the Minister for Education and a small group of senior civil servants overseen by the Catholic hierarchy, constituting the relevant policy community for the key issue of institutional development. This Chapter will examine a widening of the policy community, accompanied by the continuing dominant role of Catholic educational rhetoric. The period under review is one of continued competitive conflict. It opens and closes with contrasting but equally unsuccessful attempts by the State at further systematisation.

The Murray Report 1947

Neither proposals for church managed 'diocesan machinery' for the maintenance of primary schools proposed by Minister Derrig in 1944,[166] nor a building programme for Vocational schools as proposed by the Technical Instruction Branch in the same year,[167] was implemented. In 1944, de

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166 Nat. Arch. S12891B - a memorandum dated 7/12/1944 being an interim analyses document on 'Post Emergency Policy for Vocational Education' and the text of a letter dated 31st May, 1943, from Minister Derrig to Bishop James Staunton, Bishop of Ferns proposing church related diocesan bodies for the maintenance of schools.

Valera was writing to the Minister for Education saying that, in his opinion, it was appropriate to examine the total education system. primary, secondary, vocational and university with a view to raising the education standards of the people in general and providing improved facilities for them.[168] The Minister is directed by the Taoiseach to the plans published by the governments of Great Britain and of the 'Six Counties' which would be worthy of examination.[169] The Minister responded two days later to say the matter was under consideration and in March the next year, nine officials were set the task: *'To examine the existing education system.... and to make recommendations as to what changes or reforms, if any, are necessary in order to raise the standard of education generally and to provide greater educational facilities for our people.'* On 1st December, 1947, the Secretary to the Minister for Education is forwarding the completed report to the Taoiseach.[170] The report is by any standards an extraordinary document of Irish educational policy. In an introductory section the major policy objective is identified as *'raising the general standard of education'* and the fundamental recommendation *'that the age to which whole time attendance at schooling is compulsory should be raised to fifteen and ultimately to sixteen years for all children.'*[171] The broad policy parameters to dominate policy formulation are further delineated in a single sentence: - *'The revival of the Irish language and the fostering of the distinctive Irish turn of mind and way of life must continue to be a main aim of the educational system whatever changes may be made.'*[172] The basic analysis presented showed that 41% of 14 to 16 year olds were enrolled in wholetime education, 19% in National schools, 15% in Secondary schools and 7% in Vocational schools, and 59% not in wholetime attendance.[173] It is argued that because the National school curriculum is not sufficiently practical, and because the teaching method *'..is now more formal and academic and less realistic and concrete than it should be (and) there is little of that 'learning through doing' which should be an essential feature of the education of all young people,'* the provision of 14-16 year old pupils in national schools was inadequate.[174] Contending that since primary education has become compulsory due to the 1926 School Attendance Act that *'...It is proposed then that transfer from primary schools be at twelve plus, that the primary/national school be referred to as a 'Junior School'* and that a new form of 'Senior School,' with *'a combined literary and practical curriculum'* would be provided. *'..Because the educational process is essentially religious, ..the new system, however organised, should be subject to ecclesiastical sanction.'*[175] The key point for the VEC system then emerges: *'Vocational school buildings, under existing control cannot, however, be used as Senior*

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167 Nat. Archives S12891B, 'An Roinn Oideachais: Post-Emergency Policy for Vocational Educated: dated 7/12/1944. (5 pages). John Ingram in 1944, transferred to the Department of Industry and Commerce. (CEO's Ass. 1944).

168 Nat Archives. S12891 B, Letter 16/12/1944 from Eamonn deValera to Tomas Derrig, T.D. Minister for Education. The letter is written in Irish. The contents as presented here are based on the author's translation.

169 ibid.

170 Nat Arch. S12891B Letter 1/12/1947 to the Private Secretary, Dept. of the Taoiseach, from the Secretary to the Minister for Education. - Mr. Liam Lane (Liam O'Liaidhin) - who has been interviewed for this study. Unfortunately he was unable to illuminate the contents of this report. The terms of reference of the 'Murray Committee' is from the text of the report, also in S12891B. Copies of this report have been available among scholars for some time. See O'Buachalla (1988). I am grateful to Dr. P O'Donnabhain, Tralee, for a copy.

171 Nat. Arch. 512891B: Recommendations for the Reorganisation of the educational system to meet a raising of the school leaving age: 27/6/1974. p1.

172 ibid.

173 ibid. p3.

174 ibid. para. 9 p5 and para. 24 p12

Schools... It may, therefore be necessary either to transfer pupils under fifteen or sixteen years of age following whole-time continuation courses to other buildings... or to arrange conditions under which the Vocational school buildings may be legitimately used as Senior Schools.'[176] The curriculum of the continuation courses in Vocational schools, it was noted, '*..do not include History, and the practical subjects of the curriculum might be classified as the main or basic subjects and the literary subjects as subsidiary, a position which would require to be revised to conform with the Senior School course in which... the basic subjects would be literary and the subsidiary subjects practical.*'[177] It is acknowledged, however, that '*...there is an appreciable number of children for whom the type of education given in the Secondary Schools would be more suitable - those who will later fill those positions in life which come under the heading of professions.*'[178] J.P. Hackett, Senior Inspector in the Technical Instruction Branch was member of the committee, which drafted the 1947 report. He appended a personal note to the report explaining his position and the conflict he saw between the policy for continuation education contained in the 1947 report and the policy outlined in the 1942 Memorandum V40, the drafting of which he chaired. In what is patently a painful position for him, he acknowledges in his opening remark that:'*The purpose of Senior Schools as described in this report and the purpose of continuation schools organised by Vocational Education Committees are identical, i.e., to continue and supplement the education provided in elementary schools.*'[179] The major difficulty with the use of Vocational schools, outlined in paragraph 31 of the 1947 Report, was that '*under existing control*', Vocational schools cannot be used as Senior schools. He felt, '*It is necessary to make clear why this is so when they have in fact been used as Senior schools for the last seventeen years and when Memorandum V40 urges the full development of continuation courses to fulfill the purpose for which Senior schools are now proposed.*'[180] The hard question he anticipated was: '*Why start Education Committees and stop them just when they are doing well?*'[181] The new recommendations '*have their roots in the conflicting aims of the past, in the attempts at compromise, and in particular in the struggles of Catholics to maintain their own system of education in the face of determined efforts to establish the other two systems.*'[182] The issue was clear: '*The objection to the Vocational Education Committees is that they tend to perpetuate the second of these systems - that they are in fact essentially undenominational Education Committees.*'[183] Memorandum V40, he acknowledges, '*...was an effort to effect a reconciliation by the denominationalisation of continuation education.*'[184] On the basis of reactions to Memorandum V.40 during the last few years, he concludes: '*I am now satisfied that no reconciliation is possible and that there is no real future for continuation education under Vocational Committees as presently constituted, not withstanding the success of their*

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175 ibid. p12, para. 20-28.
176 ibid. p16, para. 31.
177 ibid.
178 ibid. p16, para. 32
179 Note on Continuation Schools with Special Reference to Paragraph 31: Signed by J.P Hackett, 18/7/1947 and included as an appendix to 1947 Memorandum: Nat. Arch. S12891B.
180 ibid.
181 ibid.
182 Hackett's Note 18/7/1947. S.12891B. The 'other two systems referred to were (i) a Church of Ireland or Protestant system, and (ii) an 'un-denominational or secular system.'
183 ibid.

day courses and the value of the work which has been done.'[185] Outlining a suggested scheme for the control and administration of Senior Schools,' the 1947 Report suggests that '*...it seems well to break away from the old basis, to accept the fact that children of different religions require different kinds of education and to build from the beginning on denominational lines.'*[186] It was envisaged that four central controlling bodies, (Catholic, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Jewish) might be required, with authority *'proper to its responsibilities and an appropriate fund.'* These religious authorities would employ teachers, generally regulate the schools in their charge and ensure that the newly stated minimum of education, moral, intellectual and social would be provided.[187] Each of these four central authorities would, where appropriate, constitute their own more local administrative authority with a view to the management of individual Senior Schools and the provision of a local contribution or levy.[188]

On December 1st, 1947 the report was forwarded to the Taoiseach.[189] In February, 1948 there was a general election, a change of government and General Richard Mulcahy, leader of the Fine Gael Party became Minister for Education.

In 1947, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation had published a comprehensive 'A Plan for Education' which identified three main defects in the system: No Equality, Academic Bias, and lack of Co-Ordination.[190] The central proposal of that document was a Council for Education. In arguing for the Council, the National teachers organisation asserted that '...in general, bureaucracy has monopolized the control of education,' and that it was necessary that '*parents, Churches and Teachers, and possibly other interests,'* through a Council of Education, would '*hold a watching brief for the people, would be both a salutary check on and a help to the Minister and his Department and...*' The INTO Plan reviewing secondary and vocational education, recommended they be afforded 'equality of status' by more commonality in their curricula.[191] The plan also suggested that responsibility for the maintenance, sanitation and general upkeep of school premises should rest with the local public Health Authority.[192]

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184 ibid.

185 ibid. O'Buachalla (1988) p265. And also in O'Buachalla (1996), 'Investment in Education 'Context Content and Impact,' in Studies, Vol. 44, No.3, p14. mistakenly presents the view that Hackett was defensive of the VEC interest. The above shows that he was eventually overwhelmed by the general consensus as to the 'essentially religious nature of the educational processes' and that 'children of different religions require different kinds of education.' McDwyer, who was a colleague and friendly with Hackett, was not surprised at the position he took, as the following interview extract illustrates: -
O'Reilly: *- Would you be surprised if I told you that in 1947 Joe Hackett recommended that the VEC system would be stood-down, to make it more denominational.*
McDwyer: - No, no, no I wouldn't, because Hackett, although a very admirable man, was I'm struggling to be absolutely fair to him now, was exceptionally religious and would have been terribly disturbed in his own personal conscience by the feeling of being at variance from religion. He was also, at the very end of his career, at the time.

186 ibid. Appendix. Suggested Scheme for Control p1.

187 ibid. p1.

188 ibid. p2.

189 Nat. Arch. S12891B. Letter 67821, 1/12/1947.

190 INTO (1947) A Plan For Education, Dublin: Irish National Teachers Organisation. p10-12.

191 ibid. p73-4.

192 ibid. p87.

In 1946 and 1947, those working in the VEC System were oblivious to the manner in which their future was under consideration. A Co-ordinating Committee representative of CEO's and Department inspectors was established to plan future developments and oversee the introduction of the Day Group Certificate Examination.[193] On 11th April, 1947 the CEO's Association met the Minister for Education. In the CEO's record of the event '*...in a general discussion (the Minister) assured members of Council that his Department would give most sympathetic consideration to any schemes which Chief Executive Officers would put forward for extension and development, particularly in rural areas. ...He encouraged them to write directly to him whenever they wished to do so ....Chief Executive Officers should, in fact, act as directors of education within their areas*'.[194]

On the 18th February, 1949, an IVEA delegation met Department of Education Officials to present resolutions passed at the previous years Congress in Arklow. Among the resolutions being presented was one '*That there should be more effective co-ordination of the VEC systems of education, Primary, Secondary and Vocational,*' passed without debate when proposed by Co. Kildare VEC.[195] In the course of the discussion of this matter, Mr. O'Dochartaigh, (CEO for Co. Galway VEC), '*...referred to rumours and public statements some very vague - made regarding a break in the education of the child at 11 or 12 plus, with resultant transfers of children at that age to other types of post-primary schools, including vocational schools.*'[196] O'Cochlainn, in reply, '*...mentioned that the Minister had announced in the course of debate in the Dail on the previous day that the proposed Council of Education would be set up in the Autumn.*'[197] At the next congress, the Presidential address referred to the issue of the need to co-ordinate the education sub-branches: '*It is hoped, therefore, that in any reconstruction of the education edifice which may result from the formation of the Council of Education, co-ordination of the various branches of education will be looked upon as one of the most important matters to be attended to.*'[198] Addressing the same Congress an extended discussion took place on the provision for religion in Vocational Schools prompted by a paper by Very Rev. Fr. P. Greaney, P.P. M.A. HDE, from County Galway.[199] In his view it was a matter of regret that the 1930 Act contained no reference to religion, but he averred that it was still correct to say that '*... the civil authorities have not yet sought the formal approval of the Church for the regulations governing Vocational Education in this Country.*'[200] The general consensus what was that a '*noble effort was being made*' by the VEC system to conform to the ideals of the clergymen on educational matters.[201]

At the 1950 Congress, the Minister for Education, General Mulcahy, made direct reference to the 1947 Murray report, and the work of the Youth Unemployment Commission suggesting a raising of the school leaving age to 15 or 16, and said such recommendations would cost twenty-five million

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193 CEO's Association:Memorandum of Conference of CEO's, held at Colaiste Mhuire, Cathal Brugha St. On 24/25 April 1946. Tralee VEC Archives. See Chapter 7 above for the introduction of Day Group Certificate Examination.

194 CEO's Association:Memorandum re deputation of Council of CEO's Association to be Minister for Education, 11/4/1947. The Minister interestingly was accompanied O'Cochlainn and not by Hackett.

195 IVEA (1948) Report of Forty-Fourth Congress, 1948, - Arklow, June 8th-10th. p91.

196 IVEA, Minutes of Deputation to Department of Education: 18/2/1949, Tralee VEC Archives.

197 ibid.

198 IVEA (1949) Report of Congress - Sligo - June 21-24th, p26.

199 ibid. p30-39.

200 ibid. p31-32.

201 ibid. This observation was made by the Department of Education Inspector Dr. Burke. p37.

pounds to implement.[202] In his view, Memorandum V.40 remedied the '*defects in the 1930 Act.*'[203] He re-iterated that '*...the state approach to education in the Irish Republic is one that unreservedly accepts the supernatural conception of man's nature and destiny.*'[204] A resolution on teaching religion in Vocational Schools was withdrawn by the Rev. President, '*....in view of the declaration of the Minister.*'[205] The question of religious instruction did not re-appear in the discussion IVEA Congress again until 1981.[206]

The Council of Education

The 1947 Memorandum was not acted upon by the new Government which did, however, establish a Council of Education in April 1950, '*To advise the Minister, in so far as pertains to the powers, duties and functions of the State, when such matters relating to education theory and practice as they think fit and whom any educational questions and problems referred to them by him,*'[207] all members were appointed by the Minister for Education. Members included Mrs. Kathleen O'Connor, of the Irish Country Women's Association and former Inspector with Technical Instruction Committee who could be thought of as supportive of the VEC interest, as could Mr. Henry Kennedy, representing the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society Ltd.[208] Among the clerical representatives was one Very Rev. Martin Brenan, now President of St. Patrick's Ecclesiastical College, Carlow, former Professor of Education at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Addressing the Council at its inaugural meeting on April 4th, 1950, the Minister presented a clear statement of his understanding of the essentially religious nature of the educational process, and the state's subordinate duty to see that such facilities as the Ecclesiastical Authorities considered proper should be provided.[209] The Minister then referred to the issue of the 'co-ordination of primary & post-primary education and in that context said he would make available the 1947 Departmental Committee recommendations, the existence of which he revealed for the first time. '*It would appear, ...that before long it will be necessary to ask advice as to the various courses that might be pursued between the age of 12 and 14 and 16, and the type of school, Primary, Secondary or Vocational, in which the instruction should be given.*'[210]

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202 IVEA, Report of Congress 1950 (Rathmines). p29.
203 ibid. p30-31.
204 ibid. p31.
205 ibid. p60.
206 IVEA, Report of Congress, 1981 (Address of Most Rev. Dr. K. McNamara, Bishop of Kerry who referred to circular letter 7/79 which contains a number of provisions *'to enhance the status of Religious Knowledge as a subject in Vocational Schools.'* p24. See Chapter 12.
207 Dept. of Education, (1954) Report of the Council of Education as presented to the Minster for Education:(1) The Function of the Primary School; (2) The Curriculum to be pursued in the Primary School from the infant age in to 12 years of age.' Dublin:Stationery Office. P(iv). (also Dept. of Education, Annual Report, 1949/50. p55.)
208 Dept. of Education, Annual Report, 1949/50. p57-8.
209 Report of Dept. of Education 1949/50. p61.
210 ibid. p63-65.

Echoing, John Marcus O'Sullivan speaking on the VEC Vocational Education Bill, in 1930, the clerical chairman of the Council, expressed satisfaction with the superior manner in which the Irish education system provided '*...a sane and balanced philosophy, an exact appreciation of what is and what is not the legitimate function of the State*'. The Council reported on its first assignment in 1954. Unlike the Murray departmental committee, it invited the views of the general public by newspaper advertisement.[211] About twenty-five individuals from a wide range of church, civil and state sectors made submissions in response.[212] The report also made explicit reference to the 1947 Murray Report but was careful to point out that its views on the matters raised were not being submitted as recommendations, but '*...merely to indicate the lines on which the education of our youth might most profitably be undertaken in the primary school and continued for a further period of post-primary education.*'[213] The report, in Chapter II, presents the general analysis of the role of primary school much as was outlined in the Murray report and cites the same U.K. reports in general support of the case of terminating primary courses at about age 12 to allow transfer to post primary schooling.[214] The Council did not recommend that the school leaving age be raised.

In Chapter VI, the primacy of religious values in Irish education is restated with existing regulations on Religious Instruction approvingly quoted.[215] However, the requirements of modern industry, '*with its more complicated and scientific methods, demanded... a trained and developed intellect, the product of more general and technical education combined.*'[216] Secondary schools were presented as providing '*an excellent type of post-primary education for those whose needs it suits and who had the requisite ability to profit by it.*'[217] Because the foundation of secondary schools by the State would '*...deprive the Secondary system of its finest characteristic, its independence, state initiatives in secondary schools should be to encourage and supplement the initiative of those who are prepared to undertake the burden.*'[218] However, because not all young persons have the ability or the intelligence to benefit from secondary school curricula that are literary and scientific, then another type of education is needed.[219] In a reluctant endorsement of the Vocational schools, it is reported that, '*We do not all agree that their curricula are ideal, but to the extent that, in principle, they aim at a literary and practical education based on the pupils' environment and needs, they must secure our commendation.*'[220] As in the 1947 report, several pages of analysis are presented examining whether such pupils could be catered for in primary schools. '*Contrary to our desires on the matter, we are*

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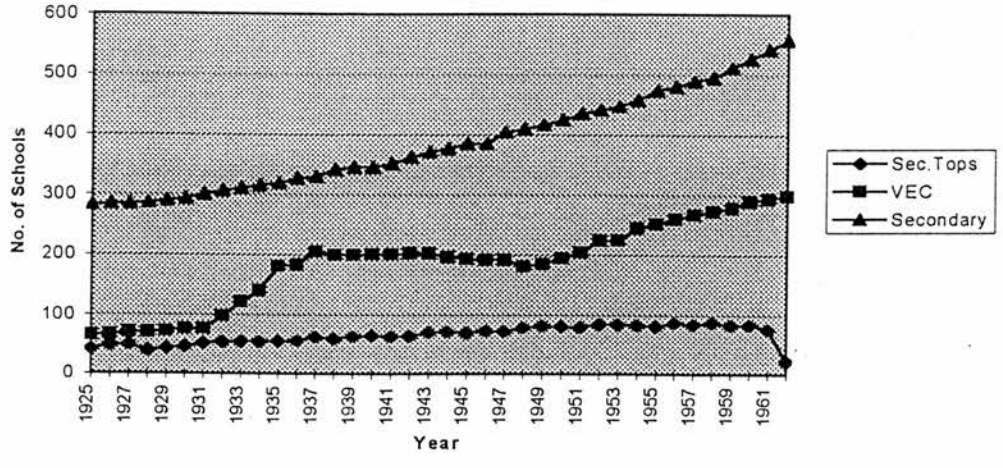
211 Report of the Dept. Of Education, 1950-51. p49.
212 Report of the Council of Education ..... (1954) Appendix 2. p314-319.
213 ibid. para. 3. p3-4 and Chapter XIII, p236ff.
214 ibid. p84-85. The 1946, 'Primary Education - A Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland' (Edinburgh) is also cited p86. The following were cited in the 1947 Murray Report,. p9-10. The U.K. reports cited include 'The Hadow Reports: The Education of the Adolescent (1926) and The Primary School (1931) and the Fleming Report (1944) 'The Public School...' See Maclure (1986) p180-189 on these reports. The Hadow Report (1926) proposed 11+ as the end of primary schooling with a range of secondary options: Grammar Schools, and Modern Schools, (selective) and Modern Schools (non-selective). See McClure (1988) p182.
215 ibid. para. 196, 130-132.
216 ibid. para. 106, f78.
217 ibid. para. 274, p242.
218 ibid. para. 375, p242-3.
219 ibid. para. 376, p244.
220 ibid. para. 376-377 p244.

forced to the conclusion that as present constituted in respect of staff, organisation, building and equipment, these schools(i.e. primary schools) could not provide the education we have in mind.'[221] For pragmatic reasons, the Council, '*...are bound to take cognisance of the existence of the Continuation Schools established under the Vocational Education Acts...*' The Council had to avoid a multiplication of schools providing identical or almost identical education. '*Increased facilities for further education could be provided by ensuring that schools of the continuation type be established in all areas.*'[222] The schemes were saved again and the VEC building programme could re commence. The appointment of Sean Moylan, a former Vocational school teacher and advocate of the system of the post of Minister for Education for 1951 to 1954 ensured that this project which involved no adjustment to the status quo was energetically pursued.[223] On June 18th, 1953 the Vocational Education (Amendment) Act was passed to allow for the necessary funding and in July 1953, and the Department of Education was submitting a set of proposals to government to expedite the building of Vocational schools.[224]

Fig.11.1
Post-Primary Provision by School Type,1925-63.



Over the period 1953-1963, the number of vocational schools grew from 224 to 298, after a period of virtually no increases.[225] The Council in November 1954 was given a new remit: to '*advise without prejudice to the consideration of the general pattern for primary and post-primary education as to the curriculum which should be followed in recognised secondary schools..*'[226] This report confirmed the dominant purpose of secondary schools to be '*.the inculcation of religious ideals and values... to prepare their pupils to be God-fearing and responsible citizens...*'[227] The role of the VECs or of

221 ibid. para. 378 p244.
222 ibid. para. 386-7 p251-2.
223 See O'Buachalla (1988) p275-6.
224 N.A. D/T S.12891B 'Morandum, July 1953. Proposals to expedite the Building of Vocational School.' An initial twenty-four new schools, fourteen in Dublin were proposed for immediate funding. The memo also reveals that government formally, suspended the building of rural vocational schools in 1948. Also Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1953. No. 37 of 1953.
225 See Figure 11.1: and Investment in Education Annexes & Appendices Table 32, p661.
226 Dept. of Education: Report of the Council of Education as presented to the Minister for Education (1962). The Curriculum of the Secondary School, Dublin: The Stationery Office. (Pr.5996)
227 ibid. para. 120, p80 and para. 163-4, p88.

continuation education is not addressed in the Report, and the idea of 'secondary education for all' was dismissed as utopian, if only for financial reasons.[228] The Council also saw objections on educational grounds: not all children were capable of profiting by secondary (grammar school) education.[229] In Coolahan's words, '*...for those who patiently awaited guidelines for a reformed system the report proved a big disappointment.*'[230] Vocational Education continued its development within its existing parameters, set by assumptions about denominationalism, educational differentiation and social competition, further developing its rural vocational schools and its urban technical schools.

Towards Reform

In 1958, O'Cathain, Professor of Education at University College, published '*Secondary Education in Ireland*' a review of 'the first thirty years' of education in the State.[231] The most serious issue, he identified for reform was the state secondary examination system, which he proposed, be changed for a school-based alternative.[232] In the same year, a colleague at UCD, John J. O'Meara, a classics professor, published a more critical pamphlet with the title '*Reform in Education.*' Castigating the Department of Education as a '*stagnant pond,*'[233] O'Meara's pamphlet claimed that the Irish Education system had failed to serve the basic needs of the state, - '*the public good of peace and prosperity.*' It had placed language revival and national identity as objectives, before public prosperity.[234] Acknowledging the social influence of the church and its claims in regard to education, he charged the state with 'shameless dereliction' of its responsibilities and 'unreasonable timidity' in its relations with the Church. The result was a seriously underdeveloped education system.[235] His remedy was the introduction of a new dynamic to disturb the '*stagnant pond*' by the establishment of local committees of education which would be given responsibility for planning and administration, in their areas. 'Democratisation and Decentralisation' were to be the keys to revitalising Irish education. Such a process would be complimented by the establishment of a group of '*non-civil servant commissioners*' to advise the Department of Education.[236] In his process of reform, the Vocational Education Committees would be adapted to make them representative of wider interests and so to become the local education committees. The resources of the vocational schools would be used for the development of national prosperity: '*...the first class scientific equipment in the Vocational schools is not being used by the pupils who should be there to use it. Through sheer snobbery, they are at the local Secondary school... learning pass Irish and pass Latin and profiting from neither. In*

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228 ibid. para. 428, p252.
229 ibid. para. 429, p252.
230 Coolahan (1981), p80. See Randles (1975) p89-98 for a range of contemporary negative reactions.
231 O'Cathain, S., Secondary Education in Ireland, Dublin: The Talbot Press.
232 ibid. p63ff.
233 O'Meara, J.J. (1958) Reform in Education, Mount Salus Press. See Farren, (1995), p236.
234 O'Meara (1958) p2.
235 ibid. p3, p9-13.
236 ibid. p6, 15-18.

their place in the Vocational schools one finds ...dead end kids.... Something is urgently needed to break down the social prejudice against vocational schools; their status must be enhanced.'[237]

This critique of Irish education was delivered to a Fine Gael study group on Education and the ideas within it became the subject of party political education debate as a result.[238] The general currency this afforded to these ideas, coupled with the 'ownership' of them by the Fine Gael political organisation, raised the significance of education issues in the process of party competition at a time of political change.[239] On the 23rd June 1959, Sean Lemass was elected Taoiseach to replace Eamonn de Valera, who had won the Presidential election of that year.[240] Lemass was to serve for the seven and a half years. According to Horgan (1977: 293), Lemass '*sensed that the electorate as a whole was ready and waiting to carry the cost of improved educational services.*' As Taoiseach he appointed three energetic and reform minded young ministers to the education portfolio.[241]

A vigorous Dail debate, on the issue of the raising of the school leaving age took place in October, 1959.[242] Farren (1996) identifies the intervention of Lemass in this debate as a key moment in the redefinition of the aims and priorities of education in Ireland.[243] Echoing O'Meara, he declared in that debate: '*A large part of the states interest was to foster the country's economic interests and the first essential in this regard was that the system of education should, as far as possible, fit the pupils to face the modern world...*'[244]

We have traced in Chapter 8 how the economic significance of education became a dominant theme in education discourse from 1959, and moved centre stage in the planning of Irish education. In this context, the VEC system was in receipt of a more favourable public estimation. The Secretary of the Department of Finance was referring to the VEC system as '*...more flexible than the primary and secondary systems and those concerned with it are imbued with an enthusiasm which, ...gives something of a missionary character to the work involved.*'[245] The first major policy change became public in May 1963 with the decision to establish a new type of school for the 12-15 year old age group. A proposal in official discourse since O'Neill's, 1934 proposals for Senior Primary schools and presented also in 1947, was eventually coming to fruition. Operating within a Government Committee on Small Farms, Dr. Patrick Hillery, the young Minister for Education proposed a pilot

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237 ibid. p16.

238 See Johnson (1992) Education as an Issue in Irish Politics 1957-1981, Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin: p80-84.

239 For a comparative discussion of policy competition among political parties, see Laver, M, and Hunt, W.B. (1992) Policy and Party Competition, New York & London: Routledge.

240 Horgan, J. (1997) Sean Lemass:The Enigmatic Patriot, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, p189.

241 Dr. P.J. Hillery, 1959-1965, George Golley, 1965-66 Donogh O'Malley , 1966-1968. Shortly after appointing O'Malley, (July 1966) Lemass resigned as Taoiseach in August 1966.

242 Dail Debates: (21/10/1959). Vol.177. Col.188ff.

243 Farren (1995), p238. The debate was initiated by Noel Browne, former radical Minister of Health whose conflict with the church over healthcare programmes for Mothers and Children was the proximate cause of the fall of the 1948-51 'Inter-Party Government. See Whyte (1980) p196ff. Browne published an autobiography Browne, N. (1986). Against the Tide. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.

244 ibid. p237.

245 Government of Ireland (1958) Economic Development, Dublin: Stationery Office, p102.

scheme of such schools for selected areas.[246] The link between education and the 'Problems of Small Western Farms' had been made in the Muintir na Tire[247] submission to the Taoiseach with the revival of the now traditional proposal that '*...education should be brought to community centres. Parish Priests might be asked to build an extra room on to schools for this purpose....*' The Taoiseach replied that the Minister for Education was carrying out a survey of the country's educational facilities with a particular reference to Western areas, with a view to introducing improvements.[248] The survey in question was considerably more extensive - it was to '*consider the present position of post-primary education, particularly in its social aspects and to make recommendations.*'[249]

The Duggan Committee

The Committee consisted of five inspectors, was chaired by Dr. Maurice Duggan and its report was drafted by Dr. Finbarr O'Callaghan.[250] The report offered the view *'that the time... has in fact arrived when we can no longer allow traditional patterns to unduly influence planning and provision in a world where a social, political, economic, scientific and technological revolution was taking place and is still proceeding.* '[251] The Vocational system was '*justly recognised as dynamic..*' and for having '*...continued to develop to suit the changing needs of our time.* '[252] Now, however, '*...vocational school patterns should also be subject to review.* ' The report asserts that '*a set period of post-primary education, reasonably planned and adequately provided for is recognised as a national necessity from a social and economic point of view:* ' and argues for such a period, as a '*well established means of securing... equality of opportunity, and as an investment in the development of talent.*'[253] The Committee recommends, as did the 1934-6 internal committee and the Commission on Youth Unemployment, that the school leaving age be raised to 15 initially and after ten years, to 16. The Vocational school, Secondary school divide was presented as unacceptable: '*We reject entirely the basis on which pupils enter Secondary and Vocational schools at the present time.* ' The emergence of the comprehensive schools in Britain is cited as evidence of a loss of faith in selectivity and leads to the conclusion that '*the distinction at present recognised between vocational and secondary schools should disappear and a common form of post-primary course, extending over a three year period*

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246 Nat. Arch. S.17405/0363. These events have been recounted using these archive materials in the recent biography on Lemass, Horgan, J. (1997) Sean Lemass: The Enigmatic Patriot, Dublin, Gill & MacMillan, p293ff. See also Randles (1915), p113-125, O'Flaherty, (1992), p24-32, and O'Buachalla.

247 Muintir na Tire (People of the Land) was established in 1931 as a rural development organisation in which parish based social and community development was led by Catholic clergymen. Much of its activities were conducted in conjunction with the evening classes of the rural vocational schools. See O'Sullivan, D, (eds.) (1989) Social Commitment and Adult Education, Cork: Cork University Press. Also Brown (1981: 160-1)

248 Nat. Arch. D/7. S17405. Minute dated 9/3/1963.

249 Tuarascáil Shealadach on Choiste a Cuireadh in mBun Scrúdú a Dheanamh ar Oideachas Iar Bhunscoil:Dec. 1962:Interim Report of the Committee to Examine Post-Primary Education: Dec. 1962. 'The Duggan Report.' I am grateful to Prof. Aine Hyland, Cork, for a copy of the report. See Hyland, A & Milne, K. (eds) (1992), Irish Educational Documents, Vol.2. p555-560 for extracts from the report. See also Boniel-Elliot, I. (1994). 'Lessons from the Sixties:Reviewing Dr. Hillery's Educational Reform,' in Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 13. p32-45, and Boniel-Elliot, I. (1996) 'The Duggan Report' (1962) and the reform of the Irish Education system' in Administration, Vol.44. No.3, p42-60.

250 See:Boniel-Elliot (1996) p43: also interview with Dr. O'Callaghan for this study on 15/3/1995.

251 Duggan Report. (1962) p3.

252 ibid. p4.

253 ibid. p5.

should be available within existing vocational and existing secondary schools.'[254] The general establishment of comprehensive schools was rejected as impracticable, the new common course should be provided in existing institutions which would now be known as 'Junior Secondary Schools.'[255] The new Junior Secondary School would '*...result in the first instance in a drawing together of the curricula of the present vocational schools and the present secondary schools,*' yielding a '*unified system of junior post-primary education.*'[256] The report envisaged a single 'junior secondary provision,' with a dual senior or post compulsory provision. They proposed a 'Senior Secondary School provision,' on the one hand, and 'Pre-Employment or Vocational stream,' on the other, as '*two-broad streams*' with scholarship and assisted places available to selected pupils in the Senior Secondary Schools.[257]

The group addressed the issues of governance and funding by suggesting, '*that there should be some local contribution towards the cost of all forms of education within any area... It appears obvious to us that local contribution is best made in the form of a levy by the Rating Authority...* Echoing O'Meara, it was their view that '*if the functions of Vocational Education Committees could be extended to all types of schools in their areas in order to allow real representation of the people in the provision and administration of all types of education, we would consider this most desirable.*'[258] Local statutory committees for post-primary education, with power to raise funds from the rates, and the right of supplementing these funds considerably from central authority should be set up. Bishop's nominees '*to represent the religious communities providing secondary education,*' would supplement members nominated by the County and Urban District Councils.[259]

Comprehensive Schools - Irish Style: May 1963

The report was sought in a rush to facilitate proposals from the Minister for Education to the Cabinet Committee on Small Farms.[260] A memorandum based on the report was sent to the Taoiseach on January 9th, 1963, which included the Junior Secondary School proposal, which were now described as '*Comprehensive Schools.*' The governance arrangements however, were to be altered: '*In view of the rights of parents, who in the fundamental principles of education are represented by the Church and in view also of the Church's own divinely conferred teaching mission, the church authorities must obviously have a large and firm say in the government of the school.*'[261] The Memorandum proposed a three person school management committee, comprising of one nominee of the Minister for

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254 ibid. p10-11.
255 ibid.
256 ibid. p11-12, 13.
257 ibid. p16-17.
258 ibid. p20.
259 ibid. p21.
260 O'Callaghan interview for this study.
261 Nat. Arch D.T.S.17032 'Memorandum Dept. of Education: Proposal for Comprehensive Post-Primary Education: Pilot scheme related to Small Farm Areas' with accompanying letter dated 9/1/1963 from Minister for Education Hillery to Taoiseach Sean Lemass. The proposals are linked to the Agenda of the Small Farms Committee via the suggestion from Munster na Tire referred to above cited as Suggestion 22. See annotation on text.

Education, one nominee of the Bishop of the diocese, who would act as Chairman, (normally a school inspector) and a third person, who would '*normally be the Chief Executive Officer for the local Vocational Education Committee.*'[262] The new schools would receive annual grants through the VEC and were proposed as pilot arrangements in eight rural areas.[263] Hillery's accompanying letter to the Taoiseach states: '*While the arguments for special facilities for the Western farm area are valid I would like you to regard the suggestions as the archetype of a system of post-primary Education which should apply to the whole country.*'[264] The proposals for a local education authority contained in the Duggan report are not to be found in this memorandum nor is the role of the VEC's foregrounded to anything like the same extent. A note to the Taoiseach next day indicates that Mr. MacGearailt, Assistant Secretary, Department of Education has asked '*that the Cabinet Committee on the Small Farms report should be asked to refrain from any public reference to the ideas in the memorandum of 9.1.62. until the Minister has had an opportunity of discussing them with the Hierarchy.*'[265] It was thought by Hillery that, '*certain 'vested interests' of Education would be annoyed at the introduction of such a school on a national basis but in this particular area those interests have not provided for the children and cannot therefore object to state action. Once a beginning is made the general application of this system to the whole country would follow slowly with time.*' The small farm plan was a convenient cover. '*..This may be the only opportunity of introducing a satisfactory system of post-primary education. For this reason as well as others... I think it most important that the proposals be accepted as part of the 'small farm plan.*'[266] Lemass suggested to Hillery that the proposal would best be discussed between himself and Hillery with the Minster for Finance and not presented at the cabinet committee where other Ministers would resent the level of new educational investment proposed.[267] At the subsequent meeting it was agreed: -

1) To approach the solution of our post-primary education problems through a system based on comprehensive courses and wherever necessary comprehensive schools - such courses to be of three years duration with subsequent streaming.
2) As a first step in this direction to introduce a pilot scheme of comprehensive schools in the areas named.
3) To consult with the Bishop concerned in each case in relation to giving effect to what is contemplated in Para. (2).[268]

When the proposals were agreed Lemass suggested that rather than return to Cabinet that Hillery should hold a press conference.[269] It was held on 20th May, 1963. For one commentator the episode indicates Lemass' willingness and ability to finesse government procedures when he felt important proposals risked becoming bogged down in ministerial rivalries.[270] It was also the first time that an

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262 ibid.
263 ibid.
264 ibid. Hillery letter 9/1/1963.
265 ibid. to Taoiseach dated 10/01/63.
266 ibid.
267 ibid. Lemass' letter to Hillery 11/1/1963. See Horgan (1997) p294-295 for support interview material.
268 ibid. See annotated letter 16/01/1963 and attached memorandum: S. MacGearailt to Taoiseach.
269 Horgan (1997) p295.
270 ibid.

education initiative was played directly for its contribution to inter-party competition. A by-election was to take place on May 30th. Fine Gael, the main opposition party were due to open their Ard Fheis (Party Conference) on May 21st, and the Labour Party had just published an Education policy document entitled 'Challenge and Change in Education'[271]

It would appear that Minister Hillery was at that time not overly well disposed to the VEC system. Lemass had consulted him about an approach from the CEO of City of Dublin VEC suggesting a Parliamentary Secretary - Junior Minister - be appointed to the Department of Education with sole responsibility for the development of Vocational education.[272] The development of the enrolments in Vocational school programmes and the growing awareness of the linkages between education and economy, was giving increased confidence and assertiveness to the VEC system. In Hillery's view, '*....those concerned with Vocational education see themselves as the total answer to the educational needs of the country. ....I personally think that we do not get value for our money from Vocational Education...*'[273] In his view, there was no case whatever to be made for the appointment of a Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education to deal with Vocational Education alone.

The author of the 'Duggan Report,' O'Callaghan, was in a central position in the development of its proposals. In that document that the VEC model was extensively used as the basis for further development. By January, 1963, when it was being sent to the Cabinet Committee, it had been significantly modified to excise the local education authority proposals and to include a reference to Church prerogatives. Department of Education officials interviewed for this study, locate in the Primary Branch, much of the influence of Church thinking in education. O'Callaghan (in interview for this study) suggests that the '*Secondary Branch were not as impressed with the vocational sector as their T.I.B. colleagues*, and at senior level this had an influence: '*...because a lot of head office personnel and Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries had come through the Secondary Branch, ...and also because there was a view held within head office that the Vocational Education Act gave vocational schools far too much freedom.*'[274] It is not unreasonable therefore to suggest that the influence of the Primary, and more especially the Secondary Branch personnel prompted the change.

Hillery's statement of May 20th, 1963 announced four inter-related initiatives - all of which had major implications for the VEC system. The first was the announcement of the establishment of '*a new principle into Irish education, namely direct state provision of a post-primary school building.*' A number of new post-primary schools for children aged about 12-13 to about 15-16, offering a

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271 The Labour Party (1963) Challenge and Change in Education, Dublin:The Irish Labour Party. This was the first party policy document of the modern period. It presented two main ideas:(i) recommended a broadly representative National Planning Board for Education (ii) the extension of compulsory schooling to fifteen and eventually to sixteen. Neither were new ideas. The third proposal for a national career guidance service was.

272 Nat. Arch. D/T. S.17405. Letter of 21/12/1962 from Lemass to Hillery. Lemass was not enamoured of the proposal 'the essential factors were a plan and money and as both involve the personal attention of the Minister and indeed of the Government.' But if Hillery thought 'there was anything in it, we will of course consider it.'

273 ibid. Letter dated 12/1/1963 from Hillery to Lemass. The letter reveals that the Secretary of the Vocational Teachers Association had recently made the same proposal to the Minister. No doubt the encouragement and praise the VEC's received in the Whitaker 'Economic Plan' also increased their self-confidence.

274 O'Callaghan Interview for this study. All the Departmental Secretaries to 1968, had come to the post via the Secondary Inspectorate. MacGearailt, who dealt with the issue between Education Dept. and the Taoiseach's office, was Assistant Secretary -

'comprehensive curriculum that would meet both academic secondary and vocational secondary need.'[275] After three years a pupil could proceed to either a secondary or a technical course, *'in accordance with his previous showing at the Comprehensive school and at the Intermediate Certificate Examination.'*[276] To provide for the senior secondary technical option, he intended, i) to establish a Technical Schools Leaving Certificate and ii) to *'arrange with the appropriate Vocational Education Committees for the provision of a limited number of Technological colleges with regional status in which the course for that Certificate will be provided.'*[277] The fourth proposal was: *'that within a reasonable period the present two years day course in Vocational schools should be extended to three years.... that pupils who should have completed that course would sit in common with secondary pupils, for examination in a widened Intermediate curriculum.'*[278]

Noting that in the areas for the proposed new state schools *'..the vast majority or perhaps all the pupils will be Catholics and having regard to the rights of parents, who in relation to their fundamental principles of education are represented by the church, and in view of the church's teaching authority....'* the Minister had announced that he had *'consultation which is proceeding with the Catholic hierarchy on the management of these schools.'* He was satisfied that it would be possible to constitute a Committee of management *'which will be acceptable to all the interested parties.'*[279] Two other 'interested parties' were identified. The state, which would provide the school building, and the relevant VEC which, it was proposed would provide an annual fund for the new schools. While he had been in consultation with the bishops, he had not *'as yet been in a position to consult with any Vocational Education Committee on this.'*[280] The first to complain about not being consulted were the teacher unions. The Primary, Secondary and Vocational teachers unions made a joint statement of claim for consultation rights, demanding not to be presented with *'proposals so advanced that profitable discussion becomes very difficult.'*[281] In responding dismissively to the calls for fuller consultation, Hillery articulated a strong view of the role of the Minister for Education: *'Matters of policy must be formulated on the sole responsibility of the Minister concerned and with, where necessary, government approval. There could be no question of submitting such matters to outside bodies prior to their promulgation...'*[282] The CEO for Co. Galway and Co. Limerick VEC

Primary Branch. He became Secretary in 1968. See Boniel-Elliot (1994) p39 for the reference to Secretary, O'Raifeartaigh and Assistant Secretary, MacGearailt, as Hillery's *'chief collaborators.'*

275 Hillery Statement 20/5/1963. Para. 15-16.

276 ibid. para. 16.

277 ibid. para. 24.

278 ibid. para. 26.

279 ibid. A proposal for a comprehensive school for Protestants, if related to a suitable region would be welcomed by the Minister.

280 ibid. para. 21.

281 Randles (1975), p124. Interestingly, no objection about consultation was voiced by IVEA, which held its annual congress, on June, 4-7th, 1963 shortly after the May press conference. An IVEA deputation had met the Minister on 26/9/1962 and were informed, inter alia, *'that the general problem of co-ordination of educational services was constantly under consideration.'* No more was revealed. IVEA Report 1963, p59-60. Extraordinarily, the next consultative meeting between IVEA and the Dept. officials contained no discussion of these comprehensive school proposals. See Kerry VEC Archive:Minutes of Meeting of IVEA with Dept. of Education officials, 14/11/1963. The Regional Technical Colleges proposal was discussed on 4/3/1964, when the focus of attention was on the location of the twelve new colleges, which the Minister had announced in the Dail on 5/2/1964. Kerry VEC Archives: IVEA. Files.

282 Dail Report, Vol. 203, Col. 598, 30/5/1963. No reference to the Bishops was made.

publicly welcomed the proposals on announcement.[283] The Vocational teachers' union look a different view. While welcoming the extension of the two-year Vocational school course to three years and the proposed establishment of regional technological colleges, Mr. Charles McCarthy, Secretary of the Vocational Teachers Association, was '*....not sure that Vocational teachers will welcome the idea of an extended Intermediate Certificate as the objective of a three year course. The reasonable step is to create an examination after three years that is specifically related to the technical school system... A vocational technical education must be an honourable alternative, not a second choice.*'[284]

The next seven years saw the development and the partial implementation of the proposals of May 1963. The dynamics of policy implementation altered the process of policy formation. Consultation could no longer be confined to the Church and episcopal bodies. The teacher unions so sternly rebuffed in 1963, became central to the policy process in the course of the next decade. An early example of the new policy role for teachers was their inclusion on the Syllabus Committees established in 1965 with the task of planning the introduction of the common Intermediate Certificate to be taken by both Secondary and Vocational school students from 1966. These committees were representative of the teacher unions, the 'managerial interests' and the Department of Education.[285] In 1962/63, there were 4,908 Secondary teachers and 3,722 Vocational teachers: in 1972/73, there were 11,250 Secondary teachers and 7,102 teachers in the employ of VEC's - increases of an excess of 100% in both cases.[286] Submissions to the 1967 Tribunal on Teachers salaries provide evidence of status divisions between the unions.[287] Reflecting on the growing influence of teacher unions, Dorney, observes

> *since I first joined the union, (1967) I think our influence has increased to a very great extent. I think it is because (a) we grew in numbers and (b) the sort of personnel that joined teaching were different and wouldn't take the old ways anymore. I think that the Dept. of Education would say, 'Well look, it just isn't worth it for us to have a row with these people.' And why wouldn't we utilise a view such as that?*[288]

While a role was provided for teachers in curriculum decision-making, the negotiations on governance for the new Comprehensive schools were conducted without teacher or other public participation. In February, 1965, IVEA was complaining to the Minister for Education that it had not been consulted on the issue of the new Comprehensive schools.[289] The Dail was given no details of discussions on the management arrangements for the new schools and showed little interest in the matter.[290] No evidence has been found in the VEC or IVEA records of consultation with IVEA on the deed of trust

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283 See The Irish Press 22/5/1963.

284 Quoted in Irish Press, 22/5/1963.

285 See Coolahan, (1984), p255.

286 Dept. of Education Reports: 1962, /3, p89; and 1972/3-73/74, p33, 55. (In 1972/3 there were 377 teachers in Comprehensive and Community schools.)

287 See Coolahan, (1984), p267-316 for an extended account of these events. See Chapter 9 for treatment of these in this study.

288 Dorney interview for this study.

289 IVEA Annual Congress Report, 1966, p73.

290 James Dillon failed to get an answer to his enquiries on the subject in February, 1964: Dail Report Vol. 207, Col.508. See also O'Flaherty, L. (1992) Management and Control in Irish Education, Dublin: Drumcondra Teachers Centre, p29. Mr. T.J. McElligott did provide a public airing of the issues in The Irish Times 17th May, 1966.

or management arrangements for the new schools. O'Flaherty (1992: 29) offers the view on the basis of his studies that all the negotiations were carried on between Cardinal Conway and the Minister and senior officials of his department.[291] The management structure as proposed in May 1963, a representative of the Bishop as chair, a Department of Education, a nominee of the VEC, normally the CEO, became the standard management structure.[292] Neither teachers nor parents were represented. In the appointment of teachers to full time posts, *'the Chairman may veto, on grounds of faith or morals, but only on these grounds, the nomination for approval of any candidate.'*[293] The schools site and buildings whether purchased by the state or acquired otherwise, was to be vested in trustees, nominated by the religious authority and approved by the Minister to be held for the sole purposes of a Comprehensive school for a period of 999 years.

These provisions, agreed between Minister and officials on the one hand, and the Hierarchy on the other, locate the new schools firmly in the denominational range of influence. The general reaction of the VEC's, unaware of the nature of the trusteeship scheme for Comprehensive schools and secure within the involvement of the CEO as Secretary, was, on the evidence available, supportive.[294] Secondary school interests appeared more concerned about a possible overthrow of the private managerial system.[295]

Hillery in 1963 had initially thought of the new Comprehensive schools - *'Once a beginning is made the general application of this system to the whole country would follow slowly with time.'*[296] His successor George Colley, in January 1966 invited all school managements to co-operate in the provision of a Comprehensive curriculum in each area by the sharing of school resources.[297] In each locality the authorities of the Secondary schools (including Secondary Tops) and Vocational schools should confer and formulate proposals on the utilisation of existing accommodation of facilities and where necessary, the provision of additional facilities.[298]

The role of the senior civil servant, Sean O'Connor, in policy development and implementation becomes public in 1968. A wide ranging article in the Jesuit Journal <u>Studies</u> was the vehicle for a

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291 O'Mahoney in interview for this study identifies MacGearailt, O'Connor and himself as dealing with the matter. In IVEA file a hand-written letter from O'Mahoney, to Bishop Murphy of Limerick (24/4/1967) in which he details the arrangements of the proposed deed of trust.

292 In 'Protestant Comprehensive' schools the 'religious authority' was represented by three persons. A similar arrangement applied when a Comprehensive school was established in Limerick in association with the Jesuits. See O'Flaherty (1962) p41, 123-126.

293 See Schedule:The Scheme-Comprehensive Schools, to 'Comprehensive School Indenture/Deed of Trust; O'Flaherty (1992) p126.

293 O'Mahoney's letter of 24/4/1967 refers to the trustees as 'bare trustees' and offers to the trustees the duty of maintenance. The letter also reveals that the site of the Cootehill school was made available by the parish as the contribution towards the school.' The letter indicates that '...in the Ministers view the ownership of the sites in little legal significance as the property will be leased by the owners to school trustees for the period of the lease (999 years) who will hold it for a particular purpose. The terms of this agreement were first referenced by the author in O'Reilly (1986) 'Issues in the Development of Vocational Education', <u>Administration</u>, 37/2, p152-170.

294 See <u>IVEA Congress Report</u>, 1965, p25.

295 See Randles (1975), p174 and O'Flaherty (1992), p32.

296 Hillery's letter to Lemass, 9/1/1963. Nat. Arch. D.T. S17032. See footnotes 96 and 100 above.

297 Letter from George Colley, T.D. Minister for Education to the Authorities of Secondary and Vocational Schools, - reproduced in Randles, (1975) p 338-342.

298 ibid.

statement of future directions in Irish post-primary structures.[299] In O'Connor's formulation we find the strongest statement of the new institutional directions which Irish post-primary education would take. He reviewed recent changes: state support for secondary schools with 100 per cent grant on approved building costs since 1963: [300] the unrest and lack of promotion opportunities for teachers in Secondary schools; and at the growing Vocational schools which, in a couple of years would be able to offer professional responsibility and challenge to the able and ambitious lay teacher.[301] In his view, *'..a change must be made: otherwise there will be an explosion, may be sooner than later....No one wants to push the religious out of education; that would be disastrous, in my opinion, but, I want them in it as partners not always as masters.'*[302] The reaction to this comment from religious education authorities was hostile. For Randles (1975: 293) it *'caused a serious polarisation between the religious and the Department of Education, which was accused of attempting to nationalise the schools by stealth. It exemplified the growing state control in second level education, with a consequent diminution of the traditional role of religions.'*[303] O'Connor was holding out the prospect that in some areas a Comprehensive post-primary provision could only be provided under a joint VEC and secondary management.[304]

Summary

The institutional policy-making outlined in this Chapter indicates a continued severe restriction in the membership of the policy community. The opening and closing initiatives illustrate the pivotal stimulus of the prime ministerial office holder, and that of the individual Minister for Education. Consistent throughout the period is the hegemony of the Catholic position, as evident in the 1963 note to the Cabinet committee, which is directly contested for the first time in the public discourse of the policy community by O'Connor, with his '*I want them in it as partners, not always as masters*' stance. The proposals of the Murray report (1947) are essentially those presented by Secretary O'Neill in the mid 1930's. While on this occasion they might have been acceptable to the bishops who now had more cause to be anxious about the growing VEC system, they constituted too large an 'administrative inconvenience' for the new government of 1948, and so VEC system growth in response to social demands became possible for another decade. The Comprehensive school proposals were generated at Ministerial and Prime Ministerial request and can be seen as the re-appearance of the ideas of previous decades, with minor modifications. Both 1947 and 1963 can be seen as attempts to unify the system, in 1947 by integrating continuation and primary schooling, and in 1963, by the integration of the vocational and secondary in a unified post-primary junior cycle provision.

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299 O'Connor, S. (1968) 'Post-Primary Education:Now and in the future' in Studies, Vol. LVII, No. 227, p225-244. also reprinted a pamphlet.

300 70 per cent *'outright gift,'* and 30 percent loan over fifteen years. This provision was first announced by Lemass in 1964, when before a bye-election, he spoke at a symposium on *'The Economics of Education.'* See Randles, (1974), p144-146, Sheehan, (1975) and Chapter 8 of this study.

301 O'Connor, (1968), p24-25 (pamphlet version)

302 ibid. p24,25.

303 Randles, (1975) p293 also, Studies, Autumn, 1968, 'Response of the Executive of the Teaching Brothers Association: ' p58: 'Mr. O'Connor's views correspond to nationalisation by stealth, whereby property is not taken over, but management is.'

The pressures of Irish society for change in the education structure was breaking the surface at the highest levels of government and educational administration. By the mid 1960's, those locations held a number of policy entrepreneurs – O'Callaghan, and O'Connor, for example, whose vision of structural reform finds its sharpest expression in O'Connors rejection of mono-integration in his '*as partners, not always as masters*' call. This explicit naming of the power relationships in Irish education changed the limits of discourse in Irish education and prefigured a significant widening of the membership of the policy community in the succeeding decades.

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304 O'Connor (1968), p16.

CHAPTER 12

THE POLITICS OF A UNIFIED POST-PRIMARY SYSTEM, 1970-1990

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND INTERMEDIATE STRUCTURES

Introduction

In this Chapter an extended period of attempted state assertion in pursuit of education systematisation is examined. Two major institutional policy projects are pursued with limited success by the state: the development of comprehensive schooling and local education co-ordination. This Chapter sketches the policy processes on these issues over a period of two decades from 1970 to 1990, with particular reference to the role of the VEC system in those processes.

This Chapter examines the development of governance arrangements for two new types of schools that develop in the context of competitive conflict between church secondary and public vocational schools, in an increasing difficult environment.

The Chapter also examines the attempts to moderate the conflict engendered by the operation of market forces in school provision by the proposal for intermediate planning and administrative structures between central government and school providers. It is argued that a number of extensions to the policy making community take place in this period by the assertion of a role in policy formulation by the legislature and the increased significance of education policy in party political competition.

It is argued that the material in this Chapter illustrates the continued maximisation of their institutional advantages in education by Church organisations, which concede multiple integration for educational institutions while attempting to retain the organisational advantages from monopoly roles.

Community Schools

In October, 1970 proposals from the Department of Education for a new form of Comprehensive school were sent to the Hierarchy. The proposals were leaked to and published in the Irish Times of November 12th, 1970.[305] The stated context was a government policy for '*...the elimination of the barriers between Secondary and Vocational schools and the creation of a unified post-primary system*

of education.'[306] The document provided for a governing Board of Management, consisting of representatives of secondary school managements and the local VEC, with an independent chairman, '*who might be the local Bishop.*'[307] The Board would be responsible for the administration of the school and its educational policy and for the appointment of staff. Capital and current costs would be met out of public funds by the Department of Education - though local contributions to costs could occur.[308] The new schools would result from amalgamations of existing Secondary and Vocational schools, *'or in city areas from the traditional development of separate Secondary and Vocational schools.*'[309] The schools would provide a '*reasonably full range of courses leading to Group Certificate, Intermediate Certificate and Leaving Certificate,*' as well as adult education.[310]

In March, 1970, at a meeting with the Secretary of the Department of Education, representatives of the IVEA and CEO's expressed their concern about the internal reorganisation of the Department in which the Secondary and Technical Instruction Branches were being merged into a new 'Post-Primary Branch.' The retention of a special Technical Instruction Branch in the Department was essential to the efficient work of the committees '*in the field it*' was argued.[311] The Department Secretary, MacGearailt responded that the removal of barriers between the two types of education at all levels implied merging the Department's administrative machinery for dealing with both aspects of post-primary education. Regular monthly meetings with IVEA and CEO's Association were offered as future mechanisms for considering '*matters relating to the work of Vocational Education Committees and particularly pending or proposed development in this sphere.*'[312] However, there is no record of any discussions on the Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1970, which was passed so quietly in the summer of that year.[313] Informal meetings of IVEA representatives with Dominic O'Laoghaire, Assistant Secretary to the Department took place on 5th June, 3rd July, 4th September, and 2nd October and 6th November at which '*many matters relating to general and specific problems of Committees and Chief Executive officers were discussed.*' Specific reference to the 1970 amendment is not made nor is the Bill reported on to the Standing Council of IVEA.[314]

The Act provided for the Minister to reconstitute a VEC which had been dissolved without waiting for local authority elections.[315] The Act also contained the following provisions:

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305 Randles (1975) p302. See p347ff for text of the document.

306 ibid. p347.

307 ibid. p348.

308 ibid. p349

309 ibid.

310 ibid. p348-349.

311 Minutes of Standing Council of IVEA, 18/2/1970, and Standing Council Report to 1970 Annual Congress of IVEA, re meeting with Secondary of Department, 24/3/1970. Co. Kerry VEC. Archives.

312 Standing Council Report to IVEA Congress Report 1970. Co. Kerry Archives. And IVEA Congress Report, 1970, p38.

313 See Randles (1975) p301 and Johnson (1992), p207. The Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1970, No. 15 of 1970 was debated on 23/7/1970, the last day of the summer sitting, and was signed into law on 5th August, 1970. 'Discussion of the Bill was brevity itself.' There were four short contributions to the debate from members of the house, all welcoming it. In Johnson's words, '...generally speaking the Bill almost passed unnoticed.'

314 Minutes of IVEA Standing Council, Meeting, 12/11/1970. Co. Kerry VEC Archive.

315 Sector 2. Such a dissolution had taken place in Limerick when Minister O'Malley dissolved the City of Limerick VEC after a welter of accusations about jobbery were essentially upheld by an inquiry. See Ward, E. (forthcoming) 'Politicians, Clergy and Mutual Friends: The Politics of the Committee 1930-1972.' in Logan (forthcoming) (b) p108. for an account of the incident. The Inquiry was conducted by MacGearailt and no doubt influenced his assessment of the value of the VEC system, in future structural reform.

Subject to the consent of the Minister and to such terms and conditions as may be agreed between the parties, a Vocational Education Committee may, jointly with a person maintaining such school as may be recognised by the Minister for the purposes this section.

(a) established and maintain in its area in accordance with the Vocational Education Acts, 1930 to 1962, a suitable system of continuation education and provide for the progressive development of that system.

(b) establish and maintain such courses of instruction in the nature of Continuation education and technical education as it considers necessary.[316]

The Act provided a legal basis for VECs to co-operate with other schools in the provision of courses, schools and even a system of continuation education. The October 1970 community school document had suggested that for the management of these schools that '*the representation of any particular interest would vary depending on the circumstances of each case and would be a matter for negotiation with the interests involved.*' The IVEA were invited to discuss the Community schools proposals early in 1971 and requested the CEO's Association to prepare a paper.[317] On May 13th, 1971, the Department announced a new governance framework. School Boards would consist of four persons representing Secondary school authorities and four persons representing Vocational school interests. Trustees for each school would be nominated by the Bishop of the diocese, one was to be selected from names furnished by the local VEC. Day to day running costs would be met by the Department of Education.[318] The IVEA document opened on a positive note: '*the concept of the Community school must be attractive to any reasonable person concerned for the betterment of education in Ireland.*'[319] It criticised the proposed management structure as '*... open to the charge of being sectarian and sectional;*' it suggested that the proposed management structure would perpetuate or worsen the imbalance between a scientific/practical curriculum, on the one hand and the academic type on the other hand, '*since control and guidance would be in the hands of those who by tradition and training are dedicated to the academic type of curriculum.*'[320] The IVEA proposal was for a small management board '*comprised of persons skilled and experience in educational management and administration,*' which would '*work through and be represented on a broadly based County or Regional Education Authority which might evolve into a co-ordinating body for all education in the area.*' This authority would be truly representative of all the interests involved, including Religious, Parents, Teachers, democratically elected local representatives, Industrial and Trade Union interests etc., care being taken that minority groups are given representation.[321] At a meeting with the Department of Education on 3rd November, 1971, IVEA representatives were told that '*the question*

(MacGearailt was the Department of Education official who had been negotiating for Education with the Taoiseach's office on the comprehensive schools announcement. He was Secretary of the Department 1968-1973.)

316 Vocational Education (Amendment) Act, 1970, Section 1.

317 Minutes of IVEA Standing Council 17/2/1971

318 Coolahan (1984) p339 also O'Flaherty, (1992) p50 ff. Two of the four secondary nominees to the Board to be parents. For text of the statement see O'Flaherty (1992), p127.

319 IVEA Memorandum (undated - Internal evidence suggests May-June, 1971) 'The Concept of the Community School' IVEA Files, Co. Kerry VEC Archive.

320 ibid. p3.

321 ibid. p5. This approach reflects the CEO's relative comfort with the comprehensive school boards which are seen as administrative and management units with broader policy and value matters dealt with at the County or Regional Authority level.

of an intermediate body had been considered but it was not now proposed to have this.'[322] Delegates to the 1972 IVEA Congress spoke approvingly of Community schools but expressed some concerns, eg: '*We cannot contribute as a body towards Community schools if the Minister insists on robbing democracy from their structure;*' and, '*You cannot vertically integrate from the class-room straight into the Department. I wouldn't mind one but if the Vocational Committees in the Counties and County Boroughs were to vanish, but you must have something instead. I would like what was recommended last year, namely, local Regional Education Committees and I feel this is the way education should be structured.* '[323]

It was 1979 before governance structure for a Community school was agreed.[324] The 1979 agreed document on Community schools provided for two or more trustees to hold the property for the purposes of the school.[325] In each case, one trustee is nominated by the VEC and other trustees nominated by a relevant religious body. The trustee function assigned exclusively to a religious authority in the Comprehensive school is now shared with the VEC. The object of a community school is defined as:'*....providing a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the community, combining instruction in academic and practical subjects and generally for the purpose of contributing to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical well-being and development of the said community.*'[326] The Board of Management consists of ten persons to be responsible for 'government and direction of the school. The selection of staff is by a five person selection board, - two nominees of the religious trustees and two nominees of the VEC, one of whom is the CEO, with an Inspector of the Department of Education.[327] Where the Comprehensive school deed allowed the church nominated chairman to veto a teacher appointment on grounds of 'faith or morals,' no such provision is included in the Community school agreements.[328] There is provision for teaching staff members of the participating religious orders to hold up to six teaching positions in a Community school as 'reserved posts' to which they held a prior entitlement.[329] Additionally, the Board, in exercising its general control over the curriculum and conduct of the school would '*ensure that there is religious worship and religious instruction for the pupils in the school except for such pupils whose parents make a request in writing to the Principal that those pupils should be withdrawn...*[330] In addition, the Board will appoint a chaplain nominated by the competent religious authority who shall be employed outside the normal quota of the school.'[331]

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322 Minutes of Standing Council of IVEA, 22/2/1972.

323 IVEA Congress Report, 1972, p52-55.

324 Previous studies [O'Flaherty, (1992); Fitzsimons, (1984); and Dorney, (1988)] have presented detailed accounts of the negotiations and controversies which took place in generating such an agreement.

325 For a full text see Archdiocese of Dublin (1982) Community Schools and Community Colleges in the Archdiocese of Dublin. Where more than one school in the ownership of a religious order was involved - there are three trustees: where there is a new 'greenfield' school in quotation or only one religious order there are two trustees. The trust is for a period of 99 years..

326 The object of the Comprehensive school is slated as: 'to provide a comprehensive system of education combining instruction in academic and technical subjects.' O'Flaherty (1992), p125. Schedule to Indenture for Comprehensive Schools. Article 1.

327 ibid. p20. Instrument of Management, Article 7A.

328 See O'Flaherty, (1992), p126.

329 Community Schools:Instrument of Management, Article 7, A&B. Diocese of Dublin (1982), p21.

330 ibid. Articles of Management, Article, 11 (i) p23.

331 ibid. Articles of Management, Article, 11 (xi), p20. This provision has been the subject of a High Court and a Supreme Court case. The High Court found against the plaintiff (The Campaign for the Separation of Church and State, Ltd.) dismissing an action

Further items in the governance structure, not related to religion but subject of concern from the point of view of the VEC interest, were

i) the provisions for direct funding of school expenditure by the Department of Education;[332] arrangements for the forwarding of Minutes of board meetings to the Minister for Education - and not to the Trustees, i.e. not to the VEC;[333] and

ii) the provision that '*the business of the Board shall be conducted in private and no disclosure of the business of the Board shall be made without the authority of the Board.*'[334]

Ideological Contest and Response

These arrangements were debated and negotiated over a period of seven years, three administrations with four separate Ministers for Education. The period from 1969 to 1973 was the occasion of the first major set of extended parliamentary debates on educational matters and the governance proposals for Community schools, and in particular their denominational dimensions were centre stage in these debates.[335] In his first major speech in the Seanad on 9th February, 1967, Garrett Fitzgerald asserted the rights of politicians in education: '*Decisions as to how it is to be provided for and how educational needs must be met are political decisions which must be taken by a Minister who is answerable to Houses of the Oireachtas.*'[336] In April, 1970, Conor Cruise O'Brien asserted: '*Either the system of education is fully amenable to the democratic process through the Dail or it is not, and if it is not at present so amenable, then it was the duty of the House to insist that it be so.*'[337] When Fitzgerald raised the matter of Community school governance in the Dail in February, 1972, he was concerned about the failure to consult the minority religions on the proposal. He was concerned at the subsuming of non-denominational Vocational schools into denominationally controlled Community schools thus depriving Protestants of a non-denominational choice. Echoing the CEO's, statement, he condemned this '*sectarian act which would provide concrete evidence of an attitude of mind in the Republic that Protestants could be swept aside and ignored.*'[338] Both Thornley and Fitzgerald contested the linkage of 'community' with 'Church' in the proposed governance arrangements, for Thornley, a Community school should be controlled by the community, that is, the parents, teachers, local municipal organisations, taxpayers and the government. A community was not co-terminus with

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requiring the Minister for Education to desist from such payments as they were unconstitutional in terms of Article 44.2 of the Constitution which excluded state endowment of any religion. Four Catholic bishops successfully sought to be enjoined as co-defendants in the action. See Irish Times, 14.1.1998.

332 ibid. Articles of Management, Articles 3 &4, p17-19.

333 ibid. Instrument of Management, Article 11, p17.

334 ibid. Instrument of Management, Article, 12, p17. These latter points (i-iii) are the continuing sources of VEC dissatisfaction with the current arrangements. See below.

335 For an extended and illuminating treatment of this period. See Johnson, M. (1992) Education as an Issue in Irish Politics, Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis, Trinity College, University of Dublin, p352-401. In what Johnson refers to as 'The era of the intellectual elite' four opposition politicians - Dr. Garrett Fitzgerald, of Fine Gael, and Dr. David Thornley, Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien and Mr. Barry Desmond, of the Labour Party, critiqued the denominational nature of Irish educational governance in general and the 1971 proposals for Community schools, in particular.

336 Seanad Debates, Vol. 62, Col. 1137m 9/2/1967

337 Dail Debates, Vol. 245m Col. 1648, 21/4/1970

338 Dail Debates, Vol. 258, Col. 2062ff. See also Johnson (1992) p370.

any religious sect, he asserted. Both Thornley and Fitzgerald presented their arguments from within liberal Catholic traditions.[339] The 1969 Labour Party policy boldly stated that '*Labour intends to implement the revolutionary ideals of James Connolly and his comrades. In the educational field this means full equality of opportunity for every child. Labour's objective is to ensure that every child receives, at least, a thorough education formation up to the age of sixteen, with provision for continuation in higher education. Education at all levels will be free... The ownership of the entire educational system will be brought under the control of the community' Each stage or level (of education) will provide for a multi-denominational student body in order to develop a spirit of harmony which is essential to the working of a pluralist society.*[340] In the Community school debate of February 1971, Labour member Barry Desmond described the choice as between a '*multi-denominational system of education of a comprehensive type,*' and '*a feudal and authoritarian condition bound by some kind of Thomistic theological version of education.*'[341] Conor Cruise O'Brien, another Labour member suggested that the existing education system was incapable of transmitting democratic values to students and what he sought was its '*ultimate replacement with a system in which Catholics and Protestants would be taught together. Until such a system existed in both Northern Ireland and the Republic, there could be no serious attempt to heal the disunion that existed.*'[342] The strong assault in these Dail debates on Catholic ideology in Irish education had significant public impact. Fitzgerald claimed that it was the reason for the withdrawal of the 1971 Community school governance proposals.[343] In 1973, a sixteen year period of Fianna Fail government ended. Garret Fitzgerald, Conor Cruise O'Brien and Barry Desmond became Cabinet members. The Education portfolio, however, was given to Richard Burke, a former secondary teacher and conservative Catholic with no sympathy for the educational agenda of his radical cabinet colleagues, but with the support of his fellow conservative Party Leader and now Taoiseach, Liam Cosgrove.[344] Probably the strongest evidence of the general impact of the 1972 conflicts was the changed stance of Fianna Fail, evident in statements by Jack Lynch, Leader of the Opposition. In 1974, he suggested that separate religious education in formative years was a contributing factor to the Northern Ireland violence. The VEC system in the republic was in fact a system of '*integrated education,*' such as had

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339 See Dail Debates, Vol. 252, Col. 122-125, 22/2/1967, for Thornley, who cites liberal Catholic theologians, American John Courtney Murray, and Maynooth Professor, Enda McDonagh, in support of his position. For Fitzgerald's liberal Catholic sources see his paper to the Irish Theological Association as reported in the Irish Press, 29/4/1976. See Cooney J. (1986) The Crozier and the Dail: Church and State 1922-1986, Cork: Mercier Press, p40-60, for an account of Dr. Fitzgerald's attempts to gain Church support for a liberal Catholic position re pluralism. Divorce and Contraception were even more emotive issues for church-state tension in that period.' It is interesting to note that the Vatican II document frequently cited in support of the Catholic position re '*Catholic education for Catholic children*' i.e. The Declaration on Christian Education was most generally available in Ireland accompanied by the liberal critique by American, John C. Bennett, saying: '...I doubt if a wholly separate Christian education, in most cases under the leadership of the clergy, can really initiate children into the life of a very mixed society or expose them adequately to the subject matter of secular disciplines.' In Abbott, W.M. ed (1996) The Documents of Vatican II, London & Dublin: Geoffrey Chapman p653. The most comprehensive statement of the developed 'liberal' Catholic view of Church-state issues may be found in Hannon, P (1992) Church, State, Morality and Law, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan

340 The Labour Party (1969) Labour Party Outline Policy:Education

341 See Johnson (1992), p388. and Dail Debates, Vol. 252, Col. 373, 22/2/1971.

342 Dail Debates: Vol. 259, Col. 280-81. 23/2/1972.

343 Fitzgerald, G. (1972) Towards a New Ireland, Dublin: Torc Books, p49. For a discussion of the impact of the 'intellectual elite' on education discourse see Johnson (1992), opcit. p397-401.

344 Both Burke and Cosgrove voted against government's Contraception Bill, introduced by Barry Desmond as Minister for Health in 1974. See Keogh, D. (1994) Twentieth Century Ireland: Nation and State, Dublin: Gill. p326.

recently been announced for state support in Northern Ireland. The Community schools as proposed by Fianna Fail, he claimed, provided for a further step in that direction.[345]

These debates around the initial Community school proposals prompted a review by Irish religious of their role in education. A working party was established in 1972 on the future involvement of religious in education.[346] The resultant report provided an extended opportunity for reassessment of the role of Catholic religious. Accepting the existence of what was termed a '*socialist philosophy which is gaining acceptance, that education is one of the basic services which should be provided by the state,*' along with the existence of a '*growing loss of faith in the ability of religious to prepare people for life in a technological age and beginnings of a drift apart of the people from the Church,*'[347] rendered Church authorities amenable to settling for something less that the full denominational system they had traditionally claimed. As well as recommending co-ordination of all religious at local and national level '*in order that all major decisions be backed by the strength of all religious teachers, the report recommended the concentration of religious staff into a smaller number of schools where they would form a large part of the staff.*'[348] The new schools they saw as effectively state controlled and '*If religious are invited to take part in establishing such new schools they are being used as a draw to assuage the fears of parents, because of the poor image of vocational schools at present.*'[349]

The experience of Co. Dublin VEC had demonstrated that most local people who participated in the consultation would prefer a Community School with religious involvement to a new Vocational school, if that was the choice.[350] The Co. Cork VEC experience had shown that where a religious order wished to participate in a Community School arrangement for the rationalisation of schools in an area, that the VEC did not contest the matter.[351] In this context the VECs and IVEA sought that their relative position as post-primary school providers would be maintained in its negotiations with church authorities and with the Department of Education. Of the negotiations with the Department of Education the available evidence is an exchange of letters in January, 1980, in which IVEA was given a number of assurances in exchange for a willingness to sign the Deeds of Trust for existing Community Schools: [352]

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345 See Johnson (1992), pl215.

346 Unpublished F.I.R.E. Report by the Working Party on the Future Involvement of Religious in Education, February, 1973. The Report was commissioned by the Education Commissions of the Major Religious Superiors and the Hierarchy.

347 ibid. p27.

348 ibid. p28-29.

349 ibid.

350 See O'Flaherty, (1992) p71.

351 See Owens, T.J. (1989) 'Central Initiatives and Local Realities' in Mulcahy and O'Sullivan (ed.) Irish Educational Policy: Process and Substance Dublin:I.P.A., p163-190. '.... in no centre did the VEC oppose the decision of the religious order involved when judging 'each case on its merits', p172.

352 Letters dated 7/1/1980 and 10/1/1980, between General Secretary IVEA and Asst. Secretary, Dept. of Education. I am grateful to Mr. R. Langford, CEO, City of Cork VEC, for bringing this correspondence to my attention.

1. *That the Deed would not operate to prevent the inclusion of these schools in a statutory Local Education Authority structure if such Authorities were to be established at a future date.*
2. *The Association agreed the Deed of Trust in relation to the existing Community Schools and the five scheduled to open in 1979, and on the basis of Vocational Education Committees being (sic) given their fair share of 'green-field' schools to be opened after 1979.*

The interview evidence for this study suggests that other parties to the negotiations were unaware of this arrangement.[353] Negotiations with the Church authorities led to the 'Community College' concept.

Community Colleges

In 1974, a Circular Letter issued to VECs drawing their attention to Section 21 of the 1930 Vocational Education Act and recommending that they establish Boards of Management for Vocational schools under the terms of its provisions.[354] Some Committees established Boards of Management and used the opportunity to alter the school name, and a number used the term 'Community College' in their new title. In all cases local clergy were invited to become members of the Boards of these schools, and as the model developed, so too were parents, teachers and non VEC representatives of the Community.[355] In the context of difficult discussions in Co. Dublin, and Bray where increasing urban development gave rise to frequent local debates about second-level provisions with the choice between traditional Secondary, Vocational schools, and the new Community schools, the Community College concept was further developed.

Sr. Eileen Randles presents the process of public meetings in the new estates of developing Co. Dublin: as she recalled it: -

> ***Sr. Eileen***
> *We would go out around and we would be accompanied usually by Brian Fleming and Ann Kinsella who used also alternate as chairperson for the VEC, and I used to be very sad at some of those meetings. Remember they were the newly emerging areas, many of the people who had transferred from city centre or more developed areas out further. The attitude we kept getting: 'Of course, the Brothers and theNuns wouldn't come here.' And it was said in a defeated, sad sort of way and I used to have to work hard...*

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353 The following is an extract from the Author's interview with Sr. Eileen Randles:
Sr. Eileen: I know the VECs tried to get the Department to insist on that or to give them that. We were never party to that. Because our view was that 'there are horses for courses.' There were places where a Community College was going to be great. There were places, particularly if there had been any tradition of any existing school, where a Community School might have been the best option.
O'Reilly: In terms of the preference of the parents?
Sr. Eileen: Yes. We couldn't come and say 'Sorry folks because it is the turn of the VEC, it has to be a Community College. We never subscribed to that sort of philosophy. But I do know that the VEC would certainly have expected some sort of share out.
It is apparent from the procedures adopted in relation to rationalisation at three centres in Co. Kerry decided by the Minister for Education in July 1985, that the principle of 'fair shares' - of pupils in the county - was deemed to operate. The net enrollment of Co. Kerry VEC students would not alter significantly with the proposed establishment of two Community Schools and one VEC managed 'Community College.' Source: Co. Kerry VEC:Minutes of a Special Meeting: 18/1/1988.

354 Dept. of Education, C.L. 73/74. 'Establishment of Board of Managements in Vocational Schools,' 15th July 1974.

355 See O'Flaherty (1992), p76-7: For a detailed examination of the origins of the Community Colleges see Dorney, M. (1988), 'The Concept of the Community College: A Case Study.' Unpublished M.Ed thesis Trinity College, University of Dublin. The first 'Community College' opened in 1976 in St. Paul's Parish a suburban development in Waterford city, where the new Lisduggan Vocational school became St. Paul's Community College in 1974. Source: Mr. K Lyons, CEO, City of Waterford: Personal Communication.

O'Reilly
The VEC representatives used to say this?
Sr. Eileen
No, the parents always. I had to work hard to show them that the Brothers and the Nuns were now going nowhere because of the changes that had happened, the decrease in numbers was beginning etc. etc. And the only thing we had to offer them was the Community school, ... or what they would insist on calling the 'Tech' (i.e. the Vocational school). My reading of it was that many of those parents listening to us had themselves just done what was then the two year course, leading to the Group Cert, in a city centre 'Tech.' They had moved out to a green field situation, new houses, their children were coming along and their one ambition was that their children would do better than they had done themselves. And I think that is every parent's dream. And they were very much opposed to this idea of a 'Tech.' Now it became a little bit testy between the Vocational, the County Dublin VEC reps and Fr. Sayers and myself....[356]

McCarthy presents the dynamics for such meetings from the perspective of the Vocational interest: -

McCarthy
I attended a number of meetings where parents, union and management were very much involved as a unit for the voluntary secondary sector and that sense of unity was never there for the VEC school. The union and the VEC wouldn't necessarily be of the one voice. There would be some sort of distrust there. Parents would be shy and not encouraged to be involved and it would appear then to the person who would be chairing the meeting, probably some official of the Department, that the case for a voluntary secondary school would be better. They would argue about the results, voluntary secondary school results being 'better;' they would talk about VEC teachers and Principals not sending their kids to the local VEC school and all those arguments would be introduced at public meetings and at formal meetings, chaired by the Department, where only the interested parties would be present. Arguments would be pushed, pushed - pushed, to try to say that a voluntary secondary school, at worst a Community School, would be the ideal for that particular area. It frustrated us that the union and the VEC hadn't got together in time to put the argument about having a public system - with a broad range of subjects, where there would be no local collection. All of these ingredients should have made for a very attractive package to the public and there was a genuine failure there to sell that. I think if some of the VECs were run by a local bishop or a member of a religious authority they would wipe out the opposition, with the ingredients that the VEC has. [357]

The difficulty experienced by the VEC's in presenting their case was explored with a number of interviews for this study. For Rooney it was a matter of - 'the image of vocational education: '-

Rooney
...I mean, it had its own problems when it set out back in the 1930s. Because it was going to work with kids from the poorer classes and there was always going to be that against it's progressing and advancement. One of the reasons would have been this insistence on the close identification... of the committee with every activity in the school, particularly in the period of rapid change. There is no problem with VEC schools, no problem with VEC teachers, no problem with programmes we are doing in VECs. There is no problem with the administration offices of VECs. So where is the problem? The composition of the committees themselves. If the local authorities had kept faith with the 1930 Act ... If they kept the political representation down to the numbers envisaged in the Act, and used the rest of it to bring in partners. It's too late for us to do it now. The concern about the political influence and the political interference is enormous. It is huge. Whether it is true or false, it

356 Interview for this study. Fr. Sayers was Sr. Eileen's colleague representing Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin.
357 McCarthy interview for this study.

doesn't matter. Its there, and it is real as far as they are concerned and that is our problem essentially. [358]

Discussing this issue, McDwyer identified a watershed in the mid-seventies when '*..the tradition of the Chairman of the VECs being priests went out ... and you had laymen taking over the chairmanship, and the laymen were always from the County Councils, were always attached to a political party and always strongly influenced.*'[359] For Conway as a public representative it was hurtful that the VECs be seen as:

> *...a system dominated by second class politicians ...County Councillors that had gone in front of the people and got themselves elected and were doing a good job at County Council level and at community and committee level. They kept the (VEC) system going from the 30s, ... and when the expansion came, people got afraid of allowing these people to have a say in the running of the education of their own children or their neighbours children.*[360]

Responding to these dynamics in Co. Dublin, the VEC and representatives of the Archdiocese developed a model agreement for the establishment of Community Colleges.

As outlined by Randles:

> *It was during those years that we began to say to our colleagues in the VEC system: 'We must look at some other alternatives.' The one thing they wanted, the Brothers and the Priests bit, in other words the church involvement. And we began a series of meetings with Co. Dublin VEC which ended up in our devising a model structure for Community Colleges which would involve the churches. We based it very much on the model deeds of trust for the Community schools. But I cannot tell you the relief and the freedom going back out now to parents in the new areas. ...Now I'm saying to them: 'Listen parents, we now can offer you a choice in schools.' I would say to them, 'It doesn't really matter what is written over the gate, as far as you are concerned. Don't worry about the management, forget that. As far as you are concerned this is a school, no matter what it is called. Your children can do the same subjects, the same exams, the same access to third level, comprehensive programme, etc. etc. etc.' And we used to get the parents to the point where they would say, 'We don't mind, we are open.' That was the beginning of the establishment of the Community Colleges in Dublin. Then from the Dublin document other committees took it up.*[361]

The Dublin model provided for the '*consideration of minority religious representation*' on the Board of Management on request, by the inclusion of an additional person on the Board.[362] All other provisions in respect of religion and the involvement or religious authorities contained in the

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358 Rooney interview for this study:Rooney continued his reflection on the matter with the following very frank observations: *Now in my capacity here as (General Secretary of the IVEA) there is absolutely nothing I can do about it. In fact, I will be trying to copper-fast it that - that is my job. I mean I'd be going off down to a special delegate conference in September with a document to copper-fasten what is wrong with the system. ...I mean our CEOs are the same essentially. Our CEOs go around protecting the butts of their committees even though they say, 'Jesus I should have left them swing for this' you know. You know, you do it.*
O'Reilly: Why, given that the perception you have outlined would be shared by a significant number of people in executive functions within the VEC system,- why do you feel that the system hasn't been able to reform itself then if that perception is there?
Rooney: Politics you see. Politics won't allow it. I mean at the end of the day, the political parties don't give a two penny damn for our schools. And I don't care what party you are talking about. They are all the same. None of the parties care about our schools and after a general election and there's a lot of disappointed people lying around the place, and there is a lot of dead bodies after a local election ...and these people, people (who) are incapable of adapting or changing or understanding what you are saying. I mean if you got a better type of person in there in your committee....'

359 McDwyer interview for this study.

360 From Conway interview for this study.

361 From Radles interview for this study. The comments about curriculum and examinations could equally validly have been made about a Vocational school, had the religious representatives been of such a mind (author).

362 See Diocese of Dublin (1982), 'Model Agreement: Community Colleges, p26-39. For a discussion of the Protestant churches reservations about the application of the Community School model to the Community Colleges, see O'Flaherty (1992), p88-90.

Community school agreement, applied also in the Dublin agreement.' A slightly more pro-active position is evident in the version of the model developed by Co. Cork VEC in 1983. Under this agreement, the Cork Committee undertakes to *'..make available to the College its support services in such various areas as Education, Administration, Finance, Music, Architecture, Literary, In-Service Training Stock Control, etc.'*[363] This provision highlighted the relative merits of support from the VEC structure to the new school and became central to the argument in favour of the Community College model in subsequent discussions.[364]

In 1988, a Community College draft agreement was discussed between the IVEA and representatives of the Irish hierarchy at which the general acceptability of the model was agreed. Episcopal reservations about the power of the VEC to accept or reject selection Board recommendations were met by IVEA accepting that the VEC's would make appointments in accordance with the recommendations of the selection Board. If the matter presented difficulties for the VEC, it was agreed that it be submitted to the Minister (for Education) for adjudication.[365]

The demographic transition that became apparent after 1982 (See Chapter 4), together with the economic stringency of the mid 1980's, added to the pressures for rationalisation on the one hand, and the level of competition over scarce capital resources, on the other. Between 1986 and 1990, Exchequer expenditure on Post-Primary Capital projects was reduced by approximately 50% from £40 to approximately £20 million.[366] In setting expenditure levels for 1987, Government decided that a thorough review of policy in relation to the planning and provision of new and replacement school accommodation should be carried out. However, in the same period, Departmental staffing involved in the provision of second level school accommodation declined by about fifty percent also.[367] The 1980 White Paper had envisaged that by the end of the decade there would be 'about seventy Community and Comprehensive schools.' There were sixty-eight.[368] Vocational schools and colleges had increased by six, from 242 to 248.[369]

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363 Article 12 of the 'Model Agreement for Community Colleges under the aegis of 'County Cork Vocational Education Committee within the Diocese of Cork and Ross' (May, 1983),

364 See Brown, A. & Fairley, J. (1993), p21-22 where this argument as presented by VEC personnel is reported, See Also, IVEA and CEO's Association statements at The National Education Convention, 12th Oct. 1993. Unpublished Typescript p75-6, and p110-112.

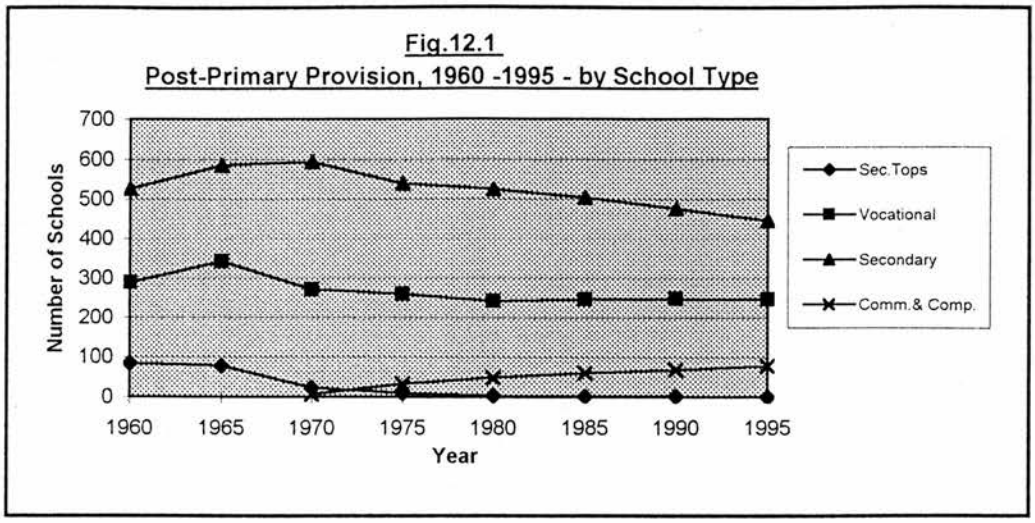
365 Notes for IVEA meeting with Episcopal Commission for Education, 29/3/1988. Co. Kerry VEC Archive. The draft discussed with the bishops and used subsequently in amalgamation discussions, e.g. in discussions in Co. Kerry and Co. Laois contained a further concession to the religious authorities:the inclusion of an article that *'Subject to the provisions of the Minister for Education as to the general educational character of the school and to the policy and philosophy determined by the Committee and the (insert relevant religious order). the Board shall have responsibility for the direction of the organisation and curriculum of the College.'* See Article 12 of Agreed Articles of Management in respect of Co. Laois VEC and Co. Kerry VEC. This article gave a role to the religious order in the formulation of the 'policy and philosophy' of the school. I am not aware of it being formally invoked.

366 See Comptroller and Auditor General (1996) Report on Value for Money Examination: Department of Education, Planning of Second Level Accommodation, Report No. 10, Dublin: Stationery Office p4.

367 ibid.

368 1980 While Paper in Education, p69 and Department of Education Statistical Report, 1990-91, p7.

369 Dept. of Education Statistical Report, 1980-81, p10, and 1990-91, p6.



Source: Dept. of Education Statistical Report, Various Years

In February, 1989, the Department of Education circulated lists of 91 centres in which schools rationalisations were at issue. Of these, twenty-four had been agreed and approved, though capital provision had not yet been made available in all cases. Eight of those were agreed as Community Colleges. The remainder were for decision by the Minister and on thirty eight, no discussions had taken place.[370] In this context, IVEA organised a conference on the theme of rationalisation at which Professor Damian Hannon identified the extent to which the processes of school rationalisation were '*left to the market place to sort out*' where '*an influential middle class parents lobby.. who want their children to go straight through to third level,*' and who do not share the values and mission of the religious orders, (Mercy Nuns, Presentation Nuns, and Christian Brothers) are the most vociferous at public meetings.[371] Suggesting that the existing Community College agreement did little to secure the concerns of these Religious Orders, '*concerns which are close enough and values which are close enough to those held by the VEC system,*' he suggested that religious orders and VECs '*try to work out their relationships for the future.*'[372] An extended series of meetings under the auspices of the Education Department at Maynooth College in the period December, 1988 to December, 1989 commenced a dialogue in which the '*general climate between the parties' became more co-operative and informed than in used to be.*'[373] Preliminary work took place within the CEO's Association with a view to developing a 'Third Option Model' for school governance likely to meet the suggestions outlined by Hannon in 1990.[374] By the end of 1990, there was public discussion of the forthcoming OECD Report in which the OECD examiners would argue that the coherence of the Irish Education system can only be preserved '*...if complimenting the relative fragmentation of the management of*

370 Documentation for IVEA Rationalisation Conference, 23/2/1990.

371 Hannon, D. Unpublished Paper at IVEA Conference on School Rationalisation, Kilkenny, 23/2/1990. Mimeo.

372 ibid.

373 Coolahan, J. & Hogan, P (1990) 'A Summary Report on the Discussions on Post-Primary School Provision in the Nineties, between Managerial Representatives at Maynooth. Unpublished mimeo. At these meetings an official of the Department of Education stated that while the Department favoured 'catchment schools', it cared not at all what the school was called or what type it was. ibid. p4.

374 The Author presented a paper on the 'Third Option Model' at the Spring Conference of the Association of CEO's 1990.

various types of schools, there exists a unifying local agency.'[375] School governance issues gave way to the development of 'intermediate education structures' as the central concern for VECs. On 26th November, 1990 Minister O'Rourke held a press briefing 'On the question of an Education Act.'[376] The following day Fine Gael published the headings under which it was drafting its own Education Bill.[377] A new phase of education politics in Ireland was beginning in which the central issue was 'intermediate education structures.'

Education Authorities and Education Co-ordination

The Politics of an Idea, 1963 – 1990

The proposals in the (1962) Duggan report re local education committees did not reappear in the May announcement of Minister Hillery. The VECs, through the IVEA continued to express its concern for the 'Co-ordination of Education' and in February 1965 pressed the Department to set up '*at Departmental level an Advisory Body representative of appropriate groups in Post-Primary education.*'[378] Research in education, the integration of services and co-ordination with other branches of education were the tasks identified for the suggested body. Minister Colley's Estimates' speech for 1965 contained an announcement that a national education advisory body would be established. The matter was not progressed by the time Colley was replaced by Donogh O'Malley as Minister for Education in the Cabinet reshuffle occasioned by the creation of a Ministry for Labour.[379] The proposal of the Vocational Teachers Association in November 1966 for a non-statutory National Council of Education was not acted on either, despite O'Malley's indication of support.[380] The VTA proposal had also suggested that the 1930 VEC Act be replaced and that eight or nine regional councils each with a regional education officer would be established to concern itself with the broad strategy of educational provision in the area.[381] This was also shelved but appears to have prompted a paper on regional councils within the Department of Education, which O'Connor prepared for the Minister in 1967 and which was to encompass all sections of the education system.[382] It proposed that many of the Minister's functions with respect to national and secondary schools would devolve to the regional council. O'Connor informs us that the Minister went to Cardinal Conway about the scheme. O'Connor has said that not until Richard Burke's appointment as Minister for Education (14/3/1973),

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375 See for example Walshe, J. (1990) 'The Urgency of Making Sense (The OECD Report) in Decision-Maker No.2, p8-9.

376 See Irish Times 24/8/1990

377 See Walshe, J. (1997) From Consultation to Legislation:A Review of Recent Developments in Irish Education, Unpublished M. Ed. Thesis, University College Cork, National University of Ireland. p6-8.

378 See IVEA Report of Congress, 1965 (Sligo), p46.

379 See Horgan (1977), p301 An Advisory Council for Dublin involving the Archdiocese of Dublin and the two Dublin VECs was established in early 1966. See Randles (1974), p211. Dr. Hillery became Minister for Labour and Colley became Minister for Industry and Commerce in July 1966. The shared experiences of these Ministers in Education no doubt influenced Cabinet consideration of human resource development issues.

380 See O'Connor (1986) p156-7.

381 ibid.

382 ibid.

was he able '*to interest any other Minister in regionalisation.*'[383] The general post-primary context was one where the Community School concept had been adopted as the instrument for rationally amalgamating schools and providing a comprehensive curricular provision in each school centre. In 1969, a Steering Committee on Technical Education recommended the establishment of Regional Education Councils, '*having accountability, in as much as it would be possible, for all education in each of the regions, being representative of all the interests....*'[384] Their proposal, made in the context of a consideration of the governance structures for the Regional Technical Colleges proposed in 1963, grew from their consideration of general need. Considering the Report of the Commission on Higher Education they '*were now convinced that the Minister and his Department should carefully examine the way education in general is organised. Why not a Commission on all education with sub-commissions on each aspect.*'[385] As the new colleges were to be regionally based, '*then though there are many difficulties associated with the concept of Regional Education Councils at the start, we are strongly in favour of having the existing Vocational Committees absorbed into the new structure.*'[386] Referring to a Dublin region, the report suggests that '*...a reorganised version of the present Vocational Education Committees could be the nucleus of a new Regional Education Council for the region.*'[387] The IVEA response to the 1971 proposed management structure for community schools had suggested that boards for these schools would '*work through and be represented on a broadly based County and Regional Education Authority, involving Religious Parents, Teachers, and Elected Representatives.*'[388] When the proposal for Regional Education bodies surfaced in the public domain it was O'Connor himself who presented it in an address in June, 1973 to the Catholic primary school managers. The Department would give a budget, he suggested, to the Regional bodies which would look after '*every facet of education locally - primary, secondary, vocational and community schools and third level colleges.*'[389]

In July, 1974, a document was circulated from the Department of Education and a series of meeting called at the request of Minister Burke. Walshe (1997), a recent study with access to the minutes of the meetings between October, 1973 and January, 1974, has outlined the dynamics of the negotiations. After O'Connor had presented his proposals at the initial meeting attended by the Minister and the representatives of seventeen education organisations, a working party was established to consider, i)

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383 O'Connor (1984), p157.

384 Steering Committee on Technical Education (1967) 'Report to the Minister for Education on Regional Technical Colleges.' Dublin: Stationery Office, p40. Speaking of the announcement of the proposal for Regional Technical Colleges, Sean O'Connor says:'In truth it got nowhere after Dr. Hillery's press release, either, and remained a jewel hidden in the Department's bosom, until Donough O'Malley came along in 1966, told me that I was from that date responsible for the colleges and to get on with them.' In – O'Connor, S. (1982) John Marcus O'Sullivan Memorial Inaugural Lecture, Tralee 9th December, 1982 'Irish Education – An Evaluation' – Unpublished Mimeo. p10.

385 ibid. p30.

386 ibid.

387 ibid. For an account of the workings of the Steering Committee see Sheehan J. (1991) 'Room at the Top: Reminiscence and Reflection on the Rise of the Regional College.' In Decision-maker, No.4, p4-7. The role of Charles McCarthy, General Secretary of the Vocational Teachers Association as a member of the Steering committee and of Jeremiah Sheehan, Senior Inspector of the Technical Instructor Branch of the Department of Education, can reasonably be assumed to be responsible for the commonality between these proposals and those recently proposed by the Vocational Teachers Association, and those that were in the 1960 Duggan Report to which a T.I.B. inspector was also Secretary.

388 IVEA Memorandum - May (1971) The concept of the Community School - see discussion on Community School concept above.

389 Irish Independent, 13/6/1973. See also Walshe (1997), p53.

the general desirability of or necessity for decentralisation and ii) the specific proposals of the Minister's document.[390] Is clear that the Department of Education official chairing the meeting, '*sought not to lead them in any way*' in the exercise of '*discussions aimed at agreeing on a set of proposals for the Minister's consideration.*'[391] Coalitions on Church bodies and VEC bodies met outside the meetings to harmonise negotiating positions around a defence of existing institutional prerogatives and autonomies.[392] At the January, 1974 meeting, the Church side presented the requirements for their agreement: They required effective statutory guarantees on

(i) the continued existence of Church schools,

(ii) on equality of treatment for Church schools in the establishment of new schools and in capital grants and transport facilities, and

(iii) the provision for comprehensive religious instruction, formation and worship in accordance with the wishes of parents in all schools.[393]

The VEC side put forward the view that it was '*vigorously opposed to regionalisation which would involve a plurality of counties.*'[394]

These statements were made at the morning session. In the afternoon, the Chairman informed the meeting that as agreement on proposals for the Minister's consideration was not emerging and as there was disagreement on fundamental issues, '*...to go on would not provide anything worthwhile for the Minister.*' He closed the meeting.[395]

Two participants at the meeting recalled the events in the course of interview for this study. They make an interesting contrast. Sr. Eileen Randles recalls: -

> *We broke up for lunch and when we came back we were told. 'Go Home!' The discussions were over. And certainly the impression we formed at that stage, right or wrong, (was) that there had been a very clear signal given to the government that the VEC system was not going to buy this idea.*[396]
>
> ***O'Reilly***
>
> *That was the proposal to establish regional councils which would mean the demise of the VECs?*
>
> ***Sr. Eileen***
>
> *That's right. And that was evidence to me of the strengths of the political arm of the VEC.*

Mr. Austin Waldron, CEO for Co. Carlow VEC, who attended representing the CEO's Association, recalled the events in different manner:

> **Waldron**
>
> *I put forward the Vocational aspirations in it, and Brendan (Little) supported me, on behalf of the IVEA. And (Bro.) Declan Duffy was the other protagonist or the other side who put*

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390 Walshe (1997) p53. For Walshe's discussion of the process, p53-60. The seventeen organisations included three teacher unions (representing primary, secondary and VEC teachers) plus fourteen bodies representing school managements. Both IVEA and CEO's Association attended.

391 Minutes of Meeting of Committee on Regionalisation, 11/1/1974, at Dept. of Education, in Walshe (1997), p58.

392 ibid. p56,59. The joint teachers, CEO's and IVEA document drawn up in the process, and proposing county education authorities, was formally adopted as policy at the 1975 IVEA Congress in Bantry. See IVEA Congress Report, 1975, p63-70, 98. The secondary teachers union ASTI appear to have been more favourably disposed to the concept and less defensive. - See Coolahan (1984), p341.

393 Walshe (1997) p57 also Education Times 17/1/1974.

394 ibid. p59.

395 See Walshe (1997) p58.

396 Randles interview for this study.

forward their view. The ASTI, and the TUI didn't say much at that particular meeting. We came back to the second meeting and Tomas O'Floinn, was Assistant Secretary of the Department, and he was chairing it. Before we started business at the second meeting, he got up and he said, 'I'll have to report to the Minister that there is no agreement on it, that we can make no progress.' And I jumped up and I got vexed and I said, 'What we said at the last meeting was our aspirations, our negotiating position. And there is nothing that Bro. Duffy said at the last meeting that we couldn't accommodate.' Now, Bro. Duffy got up and he said exactly the same. 'I agree perfectly with what Austin Waldron said.' There is nothing that we couldn't accommodate in what we heard.' 'Anyway,' says Tomas, he says, 'I'm adjourning the meeting and I'm reporting back to the Minister.

O'Reilly

How did you interpret that?

Waldron

The Department didn't want it. Now, whether that was for political reasons or whatever it was, they didn't want it. Or they had been influenced by the Church, which is an accusation which is usually made against them.[397]

The negotiations left a legacy of mutual distrust between religious authorities, VEC interests and Departmental officials, which was to colour consideration of the idea for another two decades. The extended document agreed at the subsequent 1975 IVEA congress in Bantry in many respects reflected the terms of the O'Connor proposals.

But attitudes to VEC change were ambivalent. In his presidential address, IVEA President, Mr. Jack McCann, identified a base-line negotiating position: '*...any revised scheme must be based unequivocally on the local elective proces... as applies in the present system of local democratic administration. Until we feel reassured on this aspect of the proposed re-organisation we are unwilling to agree to any proposals which would have the effect of limiting or changing the present functions and powers of Vocational Education Committees.*'[398] O'Floinn, the Department Assistant Secretary who chaired the January 1974 meeting, attended the Bantry Congress representing his Minister. Addressing delegates, he led them to understand that '*...all are now agreed that such a democratic basis for the organisation of education should be sought. ...It is therefore now a question in the main of what the regional unit should be. ...It would be a pity if entrenched positions were taken up prior to full examination of the options open to us.*'[399]

Nonetheless, the matter slipped from the agenda. The IVEA congress of 1976 and 1977 were more concerned with management issues relating to the Regional Technical Colleges.

Regionalisation – An Idea Revisited

The 1980 White Paper on Education, while it proposed a national consultation body - an advisory Curriculum Council - was silent on the issue of Regionalisation.[400] The election programme of

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397 Waldron interview for this study.

398 IVEA Congress Report, 1975, p35. The Congress took place some months after the close of negotiations as recounted above.

399 ibid. p47-48.

400 Dept. of Education (1980) White Paper on Educational Development: Dublin: The Stationery Office, p47.

coalition partners (Labour and Fine Gael) that went into the 1973-1977 election was committed to *'genuine consultation.'* with parents, school authorities, teachers and students.[401] That had been delivered on to some extent by the establishment of boards of management for Vocational schools in 1974, and in Primary schools in 1975.[402] Neither a central consultative structure nor a regional administrative structure had been realised though they were part of the Labour education policy of the period.[403] The election of Garrett Fitzgerald as Leader of Fine Gael in 1977 provided occasion for a major review of education policy as part of the revitalisation of that party.[404] The 1980 Fine Gael Policy document reflected much of the analysis presented in the 1969 Labour Party Policy.

Education debate in the seventies had been widened by the brief existence of the Education Times, 1973-1976,[405] and by the subsequent Dail performance of its erstwhile editor, John Horgan.[406] Citizen and parent participation in educational governance and the role of parents and multi-denominational education were all issues raised particularly by Horgan during this period.[407] Education issues were now more central to political competition. In the June 1981 election campaign, Minister Wilson was 'fearful of the costs involved' in the regionalisation proposal espoused by his predecessor and again part of Fine Gael policy.[408] In his view, the Irish education system was not centralised to the extent of some continental countries.[409] After the election the Fine Gael, Labour programme for government provided for a 'more decentralised and more democratic system of administrative structures for the education system.'[410]

The 1977, Fianna Fail administration led by Charles Haughey as Taoiseach developed two successive 'National Understandings for Economic and Social Development' with employer, trade union and agricultural interests, as a vehicle with which to build a national consensus on the major economic challenge of a rampant public debt. In this forum, the Trade Union movement secured an assurance in respect of the publication of a White Paper on Education Policy.[411] The development of corporatist processes of policy making over the next decade, and the inclusion of education issues on the agenda of this forum, presented from the point of view of employers and trade unions (heavily influenced by teacher trade unionists), constituted another significant adjustment for policy discourse on education. The Fine Gael/Labour Coalition version of a corporatist forum was a more selective group of seven representatives of the major social interests, chaired by an academic economist, with the remit to

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401 See Johnson (1992), p402.

402 See above and Coolahan (1981) re. Boards for Primary Schools.

403 See Labour Party (1985) Education: Socialist Principles in Education Policy: Discussion Paper, p10. *'during the period of the 1973-1977 Coalition, the Labour Party had little direct impact on educational policy. Annual conferences during this period indicated deep seated dissatisfaction with the handling of the Community Schools issue by the then Minister, Richard Burke.'*

404 Fine Gael (1980). Action Programme for Education in the '80s' A Fine Gael Policy Document.

405 See Johnson, (1992) p435.

406 Horgan, was Labour Education spokesman from 1977 to 1981. An unsuccessful candidate a 1981 and 1982 elections and MEP 1981-1983 - Walker (ed.) 1992, p327.

407 For an analysis of Dail exchanges on education for this period see Johnson (1992) p440-457.

408 Irish Press, 6/6/1981

409 ibid. See also Johnson (1992) p253.

410 Fine Gael/Labour Programme for Government 1984-1987, p24.

411 Govt. of Ireland (1979) National Understanding for Economic and Social Development Dublin Stationery Office, p21 and 1980, National Understanding p8.

advise government on *'how to maximise output and employment in competitive conditions.'*[412] With an analysis of education needs reminiscent of the 1975 VEC sector proposals, the National Planning Board said of the education system: *'In the education system the allocation of resources is centralised, but the use of these resources lies very much with the individual school. The establishment of a unified system of local education and training boards should be considered in the context of local government reform.'*[413] In 1983-84, three reports, one on adult education,[414] one on teacher inservice[415] and one on youth policy[416] advocated local education structures for the delivery of education services. In September 1983, the Confederation of Irish Industry, representative body of Irish industry made a detailed submission to the Department of Education, arguing that there was a *'...special need for co-ordination of all the agencies which service the labour market,'* the confederation went on to suggest that *'...the Vocational Education Act, 1930 should be reviewed to see if, with amendment as necessary to reflect present day conditions, it could serve as a vehicle for co-ordination and rationalisation at Post-Primary and at technological higher education levels - lending it's integrated approach to education and training...'*[417]

The 1980 Fine Gael Policy document, 'Action Programme for Education in the 80's' became the blue print of policy activity under the 1984-87 Coalition government in which Gemma Hussey was Minister.[418] Harris (1989: 17-23) outlines how Minister Hussey established departmental working groups in various policy areas, with *'The Minister taking a specific interest in the composition of the groups.'*[419] - It was deemed that the Minister's adviser should be involved in order to keep the group *on target.*[420] Harris indicates that the working groups consulted with interest groups, *'as appropriate.'* While documentary evidence indicates that consultations took place on the 'Programme for Action' policies and on the 'Curriculum and Examination Board' issue, it would appear that consultations on the Green Paper which was to deal with 'Local Education Structures' and Management structures for Regional Technical and Technological Colleges, did not take place before a draft went to Cabinet.[421]

Hussey's diary entries for October 30th, are illuminating about the processes and issues at that forum:

> ***1985 Wednesday 30th October***
> *Early morning: today is the day that my Green Paper Partners in Education is going to come before Government. This has been a great long battle to try to come to grips once and for all with the daft disparity in so many different kinds of second level schools which causes all sorts of problems, particularly in provincial towns. I am suggesting a whole new system of Local Education Authorities to bring them together, as well as a system of autonomy for*

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412 See National Planning Board (1984) Proposals for a Plan, 1984-87, Dublin: National Planning Board (Prl.2309) p(vii).
413 ibid. p294-5.
414 Commission on Adult Education (1983) Lifelong Learning, Dublin: Stationery Office, (Pl. 2282), see p129ff.
415 Report of the Committee on Inservice Education (1984), Dublin: Stationery Office, (Pl. 2216), see p54.
416 National Youth Policy Committee (1984) Final Report, Dublin: Stationery Office, See p28 and p129.
417 Confederation of Irish Industry (1983) Submission to the Department of Education on the Question of the Action Programme for Education 1988-87.
418 Dept. Of Education (1984) Programme for Action in Education 1984-87 Dublin: Stationery Office.
419 Harris (1989), p17. 'Both administrators and inspectors were involved in most cases.
420 ibid. In the brief term of office of the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition 1980-81, John Boland was the first Minister to include non civil service advisor on his staff. Boland included two such on his staff, Harris, the Principal of a 'Protestant Comprehensive School' in Dublin, and Mr. J. Cronin, an Education officer of Co. Dublin VEC.
421 ibid.

the RTCs. Part of the long countdown to finally getting it into the Cabinet room was having facilitating meetings with Alan Dukes (Minister for Finance - Fine Gael) Ruairi Quinn, (Minister for Labour, Labour Party) and Liam Kavanagh (Minister for the Environment Labour Party). We are now down to bedrock - the principle of majority political representation on VEC's (Local Education Councils), which I am against.... '

Sunday, 5th November, 1985

Yes! Yes! I got my Green Paper through Cabinet with some very small changes but the principle intact - a minority of public representatives. I had strong support from John Boland[422] *- mirabile dictu! The Labour Party didn't like the question of the size of political representation and were joined by Alan Dukes, but I wouldn't be surprised if he did it for the sake of avoiding party line decisions.*[423]

The Green Paper as published proposed thirteen Local Education Councils to consist of 30-32 members: 10-12 would be from Local Authorities; 5 members would be representative of Youth Services, Training/Manpower Agencies, Adult Education Agencies and '*economic interests including the social partners.*' There would be five representatives of the Voluntary secondary schools, three representatives of the Vocational, Community and Comprehensive schools, two parents, two teachers and three persons (one parent, one teacher and one manager) representative of the primary schools in the Council area.[424] Its main functions would be: the provision, planning and development of second-level education in its region; payment of teachers; the maintenance of schools; the promotion of liaison co-ordination of primary and post-primary schools.[425] The basic rationale for such a structure was presented as follows:

> *It is considered that the establishment of a regional body for educational (and other) services fulfilling the same function in relation to all second-level schools and the management of these schools by local Boards of Management would eliminate friction based on the management structure of schools and would provide a better framework for the rationalisation of post-primary facilities and for the delivery of other services.*[426] *The scheme was to relate to post-primary schools only; and consideration of the question of including primary schools would be better left to a later date.*[427]

The first Green Paper on Irish Education was launched on November, 13th 1985. O'Riada (1987: 205-217) presents a summary of the interest group reactions.[428] The IVEA position was that it supported the establishment of local education authorities but '*...The VEC sector cannot and will not support the establishment of administrative structures which exceed beyond County boundaries.*'[429] The Ministers proposals would reduce the number of public representatives in local education by 43%. The Vocational teachers supported the IVEA county unit position and suggested that public

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422 Boland had been Minister for Education in the 1980-81 coalition and was now Minister for Public Service. In 1975 as a delegate of City of Dublin VEC, he had cautioned delegates discussing the draft Joint IVEA, CEO's Association and Teacher's union document on education structure, to insist on no reduction in role of public representatives. See IVEA Congress Report, 1975, p81-2.

423 Hussey (1990), p177.

424 Green Paper 'Partners in Education', p5. (initial issue)

425 ibid. p5-7.

426 ibid. p3.

427 ibid. p4.

428 O'Riada, B. (1987) 'Regionalism in Irish Education' (1900-1986) Unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University College, Galway, National University of Ireland. – Only the INTO (primary teachers union) could be deemed supportive. ibid., p214. The Minister in her diary had it about right: 'All the interest groups are fiercely protecting their own patch of the garden and nobody is prepared to give an inch.' A conference in Tralee in January, 1986, provided the only public forum on the Green Paper. See O'Reilly, B. (ed.) (1986) Administrative Reform in Irish Education: Proceedings of the fourth John Marcus O'Sullivan Lecture and Symposium, Tralee: Tralee VEC.

429 cited in O'Riada (1987) p211.

representatives, teachers, education managers and, 'local institutions' should be represented in equal proportions.[430] The CEO's Association was also opposed to local education authorities on a regional basis and also recommended the County as the appropriate unit. They too advocated a majority of elected public representatives.[431]

Church responses were uniformly negative. A joint submission on behalf of the Episcopal Commission, religious superiors and managers of Catholic secondary schools argued that no advantages in effectiveness or efficiency, or of community and social linkages or indeed of participation and democracy, would be achieved by the Minister's proposals. Church related structures provided for all of these.[432] The Church group argued that the right of parents to choose '*is the essence of democracy, the point at which it begins in relation to education. Parents have clearly shown that they want and that they support the present voluntary school system.*'[433] Proposals for regionalisation in education, in the church view, usually involve an extension of Government influence and control into areas which up to then were characterised by voluntary effort: an attempt at a state takeover of education which could result in a negation of democracy.'[434] Critically, the Church group claimed that '*From the Community view point, local communities identify with the local Church-linked school and feel that it in some way belongs to them... it is this partnership between community and institution which requires to be encouraged and maintained. On face value, regionalisation does nothing to increase the degree of participation in the Church linked school system.*' In frank analysis, the Church document acknowledges that interest groups, '*Have a representational role to play vis-a-vis central government and have structures, resources and technical and professional competence which enables them to carry out their roles effectively. Regionalisation will not facilitate their task; instead it carries the risk distancing them from the source of power and decision.*'[435]

Pre-occupied with other matters, the Minister did not arrange for a round table discussion involving interested parties before she was moved from Education to Social Welfare in March 1986.[436] Mary O'Rourke, Fianna Fail spokesperson on Education had greeted the Green Paper by expressing concern that they would 'diminish the role of elected representatives.' Neither Patrick Cooney as replacement Education Minister,[437] nor Mary O'Rourke as opposition spokesperson, raised the issue over the next two years. The issue was revisited in 1991 with the publication of the OECD review of national

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430 See contribution of H. Pollack, Asst. Secretary in O'Reilly (eds.) (1986) p39-40.

431 Association of CEOs of VECs (1986) Unpublished Response to the Green Paper 'Partners in Education' - Serving Community Needs'

432 See Appendix, Part11 to Response on Local Education Structures, from Episcopal Commission for Education, Education Commission of the Conference of Major Religious Supervisors and Council of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools, 10/3/1986, Unpublished.

433 ibid. para. 2.4.

434 ibid. para. 2.5-2.6.

435 ibid. p2.20.

436 See Hussey (1990) p197ff for her account. The antagonism she generated by attempting to prune the education budget and resist teacher pay-claims had generated a lot of animosity.

437 Cooney is described by Walshe (1997: 68) as a 'cautious conservative man whose main contribution was to settle a long running and increasingly bitter teacher's pay dispute.

education policies for Ireland. Their report reflected the views presented to them in the information paper supplied by the Department and written by Coolahan in which he pointed out: *'The vast range of issues, great and small, which centre on the Department may tend to engulf the Departmental staff and distract attention from very long and short term policy issues.'*[438] The OECD examiners felt *'The question arises, therefore whether it would not be desirable to devolve some of the Departments routine functions to regionally based administrative units. This could serve the double purpose of improving overall efficiency and freeing the Department to address substantive matters designed to serve Ministers in the development and implementation of policies. There is also the necessity of co-ordinating secondary school provision to better purpose.'*[439] Walshe reports on how O'Rourke resisted their suggestions for a regional authority at the confrontation meeting in Paris, November, 1989.[440] In November, 1987 she had initiated a proposal to amalgamate a number of smaller VEC's *'as a prelude... I talked about it at Cabinet.... and Charlie Haughey said, 'Come back with it fleshed out - a full Memorandum' - and I came back with a full memorandum that required further looking at and then I just quietly buried it.....'*[441] Her decision to produce a Green Paper, announced in August 1990 signaled a change of approach, Walshe (1997: 71) informs us that her draft Green Paper proposed the establishment of County Education Committees which would have mainly a supportive and co-ordinating role in respect of the activities of all primary and post-primary schools. *'What is being proposed is to develop a new and more embracing body to replace the existing VECs with responsibility for the range of services initially to all second level schools and, later, to all primary schools within the county, as well as a range of other services.'*[442]

The Green Paper as published in June 1992 had no proposals for an intermediate administrative tier. That was to await the first Education Minister appointed from the Labour Party, when Niamh Bhreathnach published a White Paper, Charting Our Education Future, in April 1995, which echoed the Green Paper of a previous decade and proposed Regional Education Boards.[443] The origins and the subsequent fate of these proposals provide a further interesting Chapter in the politics of Irish Education with a wider diversity of policy actors and arenas, - but beyond the scope of this study.[444]

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438 Coolahan. J, (1989) 'A View of the Irish Education System:Current Issues and Problems' Unpublished. I am grateful to Professor Coolahan for a copy of this document. It was accompanied by a paper on education and the Economy by Sheehan. See Chapter 8, footnote 133.

439 OECD (1991), p41.

440 Walshe (1997), p70-71.

441 Interview with O'Rourke for this study. On 2/10/1987 the CEO's Association were invited to submit their observations. See 'Interim Submission to Minister for Education on the Government Decision to reduce the number of Vocational Education Committees.' CEO's Association – Mimeo.

442 Walshe (1997), p71.

443 Dept. Of Education (1995) White Paper on Education Charting our Education Future.

444 See Walshe, (1997) for an account.

Summary

In this Chapter we have reviewed the politics of comprehensive school provision and of post-primary institutional development in Irish education for the years, 1970-1990. The Community school contest extended the ideological debate in education into the parliamentary area for the first time since the founding of the state. The democratisation of educational discourse exemplified in the public meetings about new school provision also contributed to the growing political significance of education in party-political competition. On the other hand, the politics of institutional development now involved a set of local actors negotiating in local education markets to optimise their respective interests at local level. From this process the Community College model, which allowed the VEC to retain and stabilise its 'market share' of schools in the period, was developed in what might be described as a hostile environment. (See Fig.12.1) The pivotal positions of teacher unions became apparent in the protracted discourse on community schools. The existence of teacher union agreement with Dept. of Education sponsored proposals and the inclusion of teachers in governance, made it necessary for other parties to accept the new institutions, with their implications of changed roles in school governance. Thus, in the community school model, the VEC personnel play the role of providing representation of the general community in governance. The position, however, has been arrived at by negotiation in which the legitimacy of Catholic church nominees as community representatives is held to be equal. In order to bolster the acceptability of its own schools in new or amalgamated school settings, VECs had to acknowledge the equal standing and legitimacy of church nominees as community representatives. At the core is an unresolved tension between community as a collective of citizens and community as a collective of church adherents in the underlying theory of governance in Irish education – evidence of a state system, incompletely developed.

The Chapter presents two phases of the discourse in Irish education on the question of an intermediate tier of administration. The unenthusiastic response of most interest groups to this initiative evident in the discourse outlined above, related directly to its potential to threaten existing distributions of power and influence. Requiring consensus among those interest groups for implementation, and locating the key decision-making at a forum confined to their representatives, was unlikely to lead to change. The emerging role of corporatist national policy-making structures at the end of the 1980's signals a significant further widening of the arenas of educational policy discourse and provides for the inclusion of conceptual maps not bounded directly by the interests of the educational providers. There were improved prospects for institutional change in Irish education turning into the 1990's.

PART 6 - CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 13

Conclusion

This study of the establishment and development of the Vocational Education System in Ireland has been conducted as a case study in the relations between education and society. It has examined the contexts and the decision-making processes of twentieth century Ireland in the development of key elements of its education service. While focused particularly on the period, 1930-1990, the study extended into the nineteenth century to establish the originating conditions of the institutions under study and treats of the period when an independent Irish state was established. The study has presented the changing demography, economy and socio-political culture of Irish society as contexts for the developing education system. In presenting data with which to illuminate a range of research questions on the relationships between education and society, the study has compiled a wide ranging, integrated, if not comprehensive, description of the development of the Irish Vocational Education System.

In establishing a system of vocational education in the late nineteenth century, a state project promoted by state managers was set up which can most appropriately be characterised as the Irish manifestation of an educational development – segmentation – evident in most western states in the period. We have seen (in Chapter 8: Conceptual Development) how the relevant discourse took place in the royal commissions and committees of inquiry established by the British state establishment operating in an internationally competitive environment of industrial development. Consideration of Irish developments was strongly linked to British and to wider international discourse through the structures of the United Kingdom state. State structures were established by state managers for the delivery of 'instruction... applicable to specified employments' (Coffey, 1992: 52), as part of the expanding responsibilities of western states for the provision of services in support of economic development. The particular forms of vocational education that were developed in the subsequent fifty years continued the basic remit of the segmented system, i.e., providing a differentiated curriculum for a differentiated set of students in the pursuit of economic efficiency and productivity. However, the characteristics of the Irish economy,(in particular, the primacy of agriculture) and of Irish socio-political culture (particularly the concerns for political legitimacy as a separate state and the related need for cultural distinctiveness), influenced the particular character of vocational education developed in Ireland.

Vocational education commenced in Ireland under a British administration. It's development took place in the context of a newly independent state. In its multiple lines of integration with society (through parliament, local committee membership, its administrative bureaucracy and through its annual congress), it became embroiled in the national political contests of the day while simultaineously maintaining a level of institutional autonomy. The establishment of a newly independent, twenty-six county state and the subsequent civil war, led to significant change in the composition of the 'state managers' responsible for the vocational education system. The deep seated questions of political legitimacy raised by these events and the concomitant requirements for political mobilisation, had the effect of requiring the state to sub-ordinate its claims in respect to educational governance to the larger needs of mobilising the majority Catholic population around the formation of a new state. Almost immediately after the initiative to 'segment' the education system by the establishment of a vocational/technical provision the needs for 'systematisation' became evident and were articulated within the system by those espousing the role of the state in education, and the role of education in socio-economic development.

The absence of educational institutional change, in 1920, in 1934-36 and in 1947-51, have been presented firstly, as episodes of educational decision-making requiring explication, and secondly, are explained in terms of the distribution of resources of social power between church and state organisations, on the one hand, and the requirements of administrative convenience on the other. The exercise of such power in education decision-making has been presented as being directly related to composition of the policy communities around each of the decisions made and to the "assumptive worlds" brought to decision-making by members of the policy community. This study has tracked changes in the composition of the policy community and in the political and cultural allegiances of the key decision-makers, as well as the shifting range and representativeness of those participating in the processes. The evidence presented in this study shows that on the foundation of the independent Irish State there was effected a reduction in the range of membership of the policy community. Boards and commissioners were stood down and their role in representing the larger civil society to the state transferred to the Minister and Department of Education. A severely restricted policy community was created; 'insiders and 'the near circle' was confined to senior officials and cabinet ministers, with bishops in the role of 'sometime players' with the power of veto. The structural change most vigorously sought in the early decades was the re-introduction of an organ nationally representative of civil society's interest in education – a Council of Education. Such an advisory council was established in the early 1950's. The deliberations around the 1963 comprehensive school proposals, however, clearly illustrate the continuance of a severely restricted policy community with a new generation of senior officials, ministers and churchmen. The implementation of these reforms had the direct effect of introducing party political competition and parliamentary debate, as well as teacher unions as interest groups, into the politics of institutional change in Irish education. These shifts in the range, identity and allegiances of the education policy community were the organisational

manifestations of ideological and political contests, which waged in Irish society generally. They manifested themselves in educational discourse as difference over two major educational issues:

- the aims of education – and more specifically the relative significance to attach to spiritual, cultural and humanist purposes in education on the one hand, and to utilitarian, economic purposes of education on the other;
- The related issue of the appropriate roles of the state and of churches in education.

In asserting a primacy for the spiritual as the true aim of education, the Catholic church in Ireland through its clergy, was providing the ideological underpinning for its own role as provider in an education system integrated primarily with a particular faith community and the organisational needs of churches – a mono-integrated education system. In asserting the centrality of the economic and civic functions for education, state agents provided a competing ideological underpinning, justified the role of civic institutions in educational provision and sought a system of education with multiple points of integration, i.e. integration with the requirements of the economic, the cultural and with the civic institutions of the society.

As the independent Irish state moved to foundation, a range of positions on these key issues were finding expression in both discourse and in institutional terms. The 'value disequilibrium', the ambiguity, and the cultural shift of the period of Home Rule/Independence politics provided the opportunity for vigorous ideological and institutional conflict. The Technical Instruction system as established in 1899 held forth an ideal of:

> *A proper system of education which while paying due heed to the training of character and will, will train the intelligence to deal with concrete things as well as with ideas, and which will give the generations receiving it skill and knowledge and will bring out and make them conscious of their own powers and resources in practical affairs... it is to the individual and rational resourcefulness and the confident character thus developed by an education system more than to any other course, countries which have in recent times achieved marked industrial success owe their first progress*[445]

The establishment and the continuance of these ideas with their liberal/enlightenment underpinning, was a *strategic choice* of those state managers who constituted the policy community in the first two decades of the twentieth century in Ireland. Their continuance in the new state was an '*administrative convenience*'. The failure to extend these ideals into the governance of the primary and the secondary systems was the second *strategic choice* of the early decades. In the educational settlement of the new Irish state, the Irish enlightenment tradition with roots in the Anglo Irish ascendancy, as well as in eighteenth century republican rhetoric,[446] and articulating secular aspirations for an emerging Irish

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445 Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, First Annual Report, 1900-1901, p21

446 For an illuminating revisit to this set of ideas, putting 'freedom from dominance' at the centre of republican theory, see Pettit, P (1997) 'Republicanism:A Theory of Freedom and Government, Oxford:Oxford University Press. Pettit, from Co.Galway, is Professor of Social and Political Theory at the Australian National University, Research School of Social Science.

nation, was submerged by a competing Gaelic-Romantic, set of ideals and beliefs, neither secular nor individualistic but decidedly rural, Gaelic and Roman Catholic. From the 1919 revolutionary Dail decision to "support the Bishops" on the MacPherson Bill, to the 1947 recommendation to stand down the VEC system because of its incurable "undenominational" character, the secular, enlightenment tradition was under increasing pressure from the forces advocating a civic culture in which social solidarity was achieved around religious identity. Not until the revolutionary generation had been replaced and a new elite constituted the educational policy community was the ideological contest of the pre-revolutionary period re-opened. Even then, the hegemony of a paradigm in which parental rights in education were legitimately represented by church leaders and in which education was essentially a spiritual process, made it impossible for a new generation of state reformers, (like Hillery or MacGearailt) to move away from it, primarily because the ideological understandings necessary to underpin a set of educational rights and duties as belonging to citizens in a modern state were not sufficiently clearly articulated and asserted. The introduction of the unified post-primary/comprehensive school concept in 1963 was facilitated by the avoidance of a direct conflict with the bishops and the presentation of the reform in terms of the ascendant public values of '*equality of opportunity*' and the economic significance of education

The secular, civic tradition retained its presence by adapting itself to the dominance of religious ideas, as in the 1930 concessions of the Minister to the bishops, the 1942, Memorandum V40, and the Community Colleges in the 1970's. However, the key positioning of the role of education in economic development at the centre of state analysis of post-primary education development, that is, the adoption of the Human Capital Theory from 1959 to 1965, made what was a minor theme ensconced in the VEC system into the central concern of the Irish state in education. This study has traced the transition. It has been argued here that the establishment of the Vocational Education System in 1930 entailed a significant shift in the official view of what was the most appropriate approach to the formation of productive skills in the new Irish state. The passing of the 1930 Act occasioned a shift from a rhetoric of scientifically based technical education which was primarily focused on the provision of technicians for a process of industrialisation, to a more diffuse form of "pre-vocational" education in a self-sufficient, mainly agricultural economy. The conceptual elaboration of "vocational education" contained in the act, facilitated a switch in emphasis from an earlier technical education for industrial expansion to a more general raising of the capacity of the state's human resources through continuation schools. Further, the relative importance given to agriculture meant that the "rural vocational school" became the modal institution of the new service. The development of technical manpower for industrial development was relegated to a less significant role. This early change of policy emphasis, from technical education or education for industrial development to pre-vocational education, is to be understood, firstly, as part of the matrix of positions which are evident in the economic policy of the Free State Governments, 1924-1959. The change is to be understood also in relation to a policy of utilising the schools to contribute to the 'Gaelicisation' process through which the young state was asserting it cultural distinctiveness. In addition, the

influence of Catholic Church personnel on the system reinforced the generalist emphasis in the provision of the system.

By the mid-fifties, the new state's experiment with economic self-sufficiency was over and there commenced an extended period of development and change for Irish society, for education in general, and for the vocational education system in particular. On the one hand, the 'general education' mission of the vocational education system was further expanded. The very existence of the VEC system provided an administrative system available to facilitate the expansion of general, comprehensive, second-level education. In addition however, a new-found urgency for industrial development, now to be made possible by foreign investment, attracted by tax incentives, led to the re-emergence of the need for technical manpower and a new rhetoric of human resource development. If, on the one hand, the existing VEC system provided an administrative framework which facilitated the establishment of regional institutions for the provision of 'middle-level', technical manpower, on the other hand, industrial training was seen as requiring a different, more industrially attuned, mode of delivery to be provided by a national industrial training agency. In a series of manifestations over a thirty-year period since the early 1960's, a national industrial training agency continued to co-exist alongside the VEC system, with complementary and sometimes competing missions in respect of human resource development. In this context, the de facto mission of the VECs changed. A comprehensive second-level school now became the model VEC institution and its function in the formation of productive skills became less immediate and direct. A new set of third level VEC institutions (the RTC's and Institutes of Technology) was developed to become the VEC "Third Level Technological Sector." These institutions reconstituted and greatly expanded the technical and higher technical education provided for in the VEC Act to the point that in 1992 they were removed from the operations of VEC's by legislation.

It is argued in this study that VEC institutions (most particularly the continuation schools) have consistently been a key 'sorting' device for the human resources of the Irish State. This function was explicitly included in their educational mission with appropriate education for appropriate, stable expectations in life (Memorandum V.40). In the course of the sixty years of the VEC system under examination, this function has been contested, with the most rigorous contest presented by the front line teaching staff appealing to basic egalitarian principles. In the early period, VEC institutions were delineated firmly from general education institutions, that is secondary schools. Decisions at age fourteen to attend programmes at VEC institutions became a critical point of occupational choice or allocation. Subsequently, by virtue of their continued organisational separateness, VEC second-level schools have continued *(unwilling, but to a considerable extent helplessly),* to operate as a key element in the sorting of Irish youth in preparation for differential participation in the labour market. During the first phase of its development the VEC system conceived of itself as operating primarily in a series of labour-market arenas that were local and to a significant degree discrete. In this way, the manpower planning unit was the VEC area, either a county, a county borough (the cities of Dublin,

Cork, Limerick or Waterford), or an urban district. The growing enrolments in continuation courses withheld 14-16 year-olds from the labour market, as well as purporting to provide necessary productive skills. The introduction of a national training agency was a sign of the move to more comprehensive, state-wide planning for human resource development. In this process the local dimension of the VEC operation became less significant. This shift was accompanied by a similar shift in the funding of the system. The share of local funding decreased from 40-50% up to the 1960's, to as low as 0.05% in the 1990's, when central exchequer funding dominates almost totally. In the new order, the VEC's were available as the local delivery mechanism for a series of national programmes designed to retain young people in the school system and programmes for the longterm unemployed, such as the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) in the late 1980's and 1990's.

We have argued in this study that the expansion and the reform in Irish education had the effect of maximally maintaining social inequality. Second-level school provision in vocational schools presented lower transition barriers and varying cost/benefit balances to families and students, depending on their location, occupation and status. The Vocational school option presented with lower direct costs, but presented itself also as a source of lower social and economic returns. Until 1947, the vocational school provided no marketable educational credential for its mainstream course, the Continuation Programme. Use value was emphasised over exchange value. This study presents a VEC system which has operated for a long period as a strongly class related provision, with lower access barriers, but offering credentials with reduced exchange value. Vocational schools were primarily associated with making provision for manual and skilled manual employments, and their certification reflected this. In providing credentials for access to service employment, VEC school credentials (the Day Group Certificate Examinations) competed at a disadvantage in terms of status in comparison with general secondary credentials. The VEC schools continue throughout the period to be perceived in general terms as sites of less social capital and so to yield less in terms of social return to those most aware of the significance of social capital. Barriers to school survival are significantly higher for vocational school students than from those from the same social class that choose the secondary school.

The social class composition of schools has a significant effect on student aspiration and achievement and, to quote Clancy (1995: 490) again, "*...the institutionalisation, within a system of publicly-funded education, of invidious status hierarchies between different post-primary schools serves to reproduce existing hierarchies.*"

Vocational schools continue their dual role of confirming and contesting the processes of social selection inherent in the Irish education system, a necessary feature of a dual-track segmented provision.

The segmentation in the Irish education system which occurred with the establishment of the vocational education system (in its 1899 and 1930 variants) was a rational, pragmatic initiative by stage managers parallel to developments in other modernising Western states.

The segmented post-primary system generated a form of competitive conflict for key educational resources. While modest state financial support available to the VEC system in the first decade of its existence and again in the 1950's provided for institutional development through school building programmes, these resources were constrained when church controlled schools actively mobilised their superior policy leverage in what would now be termed as a 'discourse of derision'. In the 1940's, following the Brennan controversy, and again in the 1970's in the context of the Community Schools debates at local level, the negotiating resources of the VEC system were sufficient to prevent system elimination but insufficient to provide for significant growth and system development. In both cases the incorporation of Church requirements into the organisational arrangements for Vocational schools was an imperative of survival. This study indicates that 'market-share' of enrolment remained at 25-29% over the entire period of the study. The development of additional schools was capped by policy decisions not to invest at just those points (in 1939 and 1963) when expansion from being a minor to being a major provider appeared possible. It would appear that the critical organisational weaknesses of the VEC system were, firstly, the non-availability of a coherent statement of the role of public education provision in a language consistent with dominant public values, and secondly, the inability of the system to self reform due to the primacy of party political linkages in its own governance structures.

Nonetheless, the VEC system has remained the carrier of the idea of citizen involvement in educational governance. The continued existence of the system has provided a bridge between state and civil society in a manner which continues to attribute to the individual citizen, and to representatives of citizens identified by due process, the moral role of articulating their vision of what constitutes the educational good of their community. The inadequacies of the representative nature of VECs, as amply evident in this study, do not belie this core enlightenment insight, inherent in the system. The containment of the Vocational Education Committee system, in terms of its clientele and its remit, has rendered its influence in Irish society marginal rather than central. Nonetheless, it carries within it the seeds of the further modernisation of Irish education and Irish society.

Sources and Bibliography

Sources and bibliographical information are arranged in categories as follows:

1. Interviews
2. Legislation
3. Government Publications
4. Unpublished Documentation Sources
5. Other Sources
6. Unpublished Theses
7. Published Books and Articles.

1. Interviews were conducted for this study with the following people:

Politicians

- Mr. Niall Blaney, Minister for Local Government, 1957-66, Minister for Agriculture 1966-69, Member and Chair, Donegal VEC, Member of Standing Council IVEA, Mr. Blaney died in November 1995.
- Mr. Sean Conway, member of Co Meath VEC, 1964-1996, President IVEA, 1986-1995. Mr. Conway died in December 1995.
- Mr. S. Donegan, Member and Chair, City of Dublin VEC, 1963-1987.
- Ms. Gemma Hussey, Minister for Education, 1982-1986
- Mr. Brian Lenihan, Minister for Education, 1968-69 and member of Co. Roscommon VEC. Mr.Lenihan's career included a wide range of senior cabinet posts. Mr. Lenihan died in November 1995.
- Ms. Mary O'Rourke, Minister for Education, 1987-91, Member and Chair, Westmeath VEC, and Board of Management, Athlone, RTC. Mrs. O'Rourke has held a number of senior portfolios in Fianna Fail led governments since 1986
- In addition, a telephone interview was undertaken with Dr. Garrett Fitzgerald, Prime Minister 1981-1982, 1982-87.

Department of Education Officials:

- Mr. William Hyland, Member of OECD Study Team, 1963-66, Senior Statistician, Department of Education 1966-90.
- Mr. Noel Lindsay, Secretary, Department of Education, 1989-92, who joined the Department in the early 1950's.
- Dr. Finbar O'Callaghan, Former Chief Inspector and Asst. Secretary, Department of Education, who joined the Technical Instruction Branch as an inspector in the early 1950's.
- Mr. Liam O'Liadhin, Secretary, Department of Education, 1979-85, who joined the Department of Education in 1946.
- Mr. Sean O'Mahony, Asst. Secretary, Department of Education 1977-84, who joined the Department in the mid-1940's at the Technical Instruction Branch.

Teachers and Teacher Union Representatives

- Mr. Jim Dorney, Teacher and General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland, 1976-date
- Mr. Jim Lysaght, Teacher and Principal, Mallow Vocational School: Retired 1992.
- Mr. Sean McCarthy, Teacher and former President of Teachers' Union of Ireland, 1987.
- Mr. Micheal O'Donnell, Teacher and Principal, Bolton Street College of Technology, and Director, Dublin Institute of Technology, (1955-1995)
- Mr. J.K. Rooney, who has been a teacher, a President of the Teachers' Union of Ireland, and the General Secretary of IVEA 1980- 1996. Mr. Rooney died in September 1996.

Church People

- Sr. Teresa McCormack, Former Head, Secondary School, and Director, Education Office, Conference of Religious in Ireland

- Bro. Mark McDonnell, Provincial, Irish Christian Brothers, former Secondary Headmaster and teacher.
- Dr. Francis McKiernan, Bishop of Kilmore (Cavan) former Secretary, School Principal and Chairman, Irish Episcopal Commission for Education
- Dr. Denis O'Callaghan, Dean of Cloyne and Chairman, Co. Cork VEC.
- Sr. Eileen Randles, IBVM, Former Secondary Head, former Education Secretary, Diocese of Dublin, former Secretary, Irish Episcopal Commission for Education, currently Secretary, Catholic Primary School Managers Association

Chief Executive Officers

- Dr. J. McCabe, CEO, Co. Sligo VEC, 1962-67, subsequently with UNESCO and the World Bank.
- Mr. Seamus McDwyer, CEO, Co. Kerry VEC, 1949-84. Mr. McDwyer died in March 1996.
- Mr. Austin Waldron, CEO, Co. Carlow VEC, 1954-90.

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1898 Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898 (No .61 & 62 Vic.C.4).

1899 The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899. (No. 62 & 63 Vict.C.50.)

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